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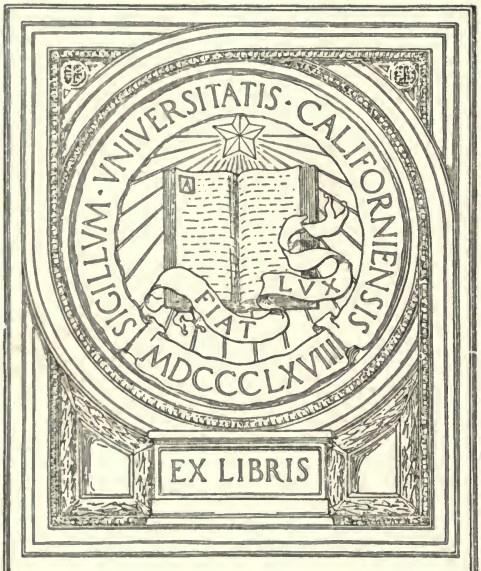
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S. Rowson

A

MEMOIR

OF

MRS. SUSANNA ROWSON,

WITH

ELEGANT AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXTRACTS FROM HER WRITINGS IN PROSE AND POETRY.

BY

ELIAS NASON, M.A.

La nature et le cœur sont inépuisables.
Bernardin de Saint Pierre.

With her book and her voice and her lyre,
To wing all her moments at home;
And with scenes that new rapture inspire,
As oft as it suits her to roam,
Will she have just the life she prefers?
Cowper.

ALBANY, N. Y.:
JOEL MUNSELL.
1870.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

DEDICATORY.

TO HIS

ESTIMABLE AND LONG TRIED FRIEND,

JOHN WARD DEAN, A.M.,

WHO BRINGS TO

THE STUDY OF EARLY AMERICAN LITERATURE,

A RETENTIVE MEMORY, A SOUND JUDGMENT, A REFINED TASTE, AND AN ARDENT ZEAL;

AND

WHOSE MENTAL ACQUISITIONS ARE EQUALLED ONLY BY HIS MODESTY AND GOOD SENSE,

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY

Inscribed,

BY

HIS VERY OBEDIENT SERVANT,

ELIAS NASON.

BRIGHTSIDE, Jan. 1, 1870.

The excellent Portrait of Mrs. Rowson was engraved expressly for this work, at the expense of Mrs. John J. Clarke, née *Rebecca Cordis* (see p. 190), *in testimony of her affectionate regard for the memory of her distinguished relative.*

Publisher.

A MEMOIR

OF

MRS. SUSANNA ROWSON.

CHAPTER I.

Dear to memory are the scenes of our early days, though then the cup of existence was often mingled with the tear of affliction.—MRS. ROWSON.

The ship hangs hovering on the verge of death.—*Falconer.*

Mrs. SUSANNA ROWSON was one of the most remarkable women of her day. Her life is as romantic as any creation of her gifted pen, and is a beautiful illustration of the potency of a large, glowing heart, and a determined will to rise superior to circumstance and achieve success. She was the only daughter of Lieutenant, afterwards Captain William Haswell, of the British navy, and was born in Portsmouth, Hampshire, England, in 1762. Her mother's maiden name was Susanna Musgrave,[1] and she died in giving her infant

[1] The Musgrave family is of German origin, and settled in England as early as the Norman conquest. Camden styles it "the martial and warlike family of Musgrave." *Mus* signifies fen; *grave*, governor; i.e., the governor of the fens, as landgrave, etc. Arms: az. six annulets, or.—*Burke's Commoners of England*, Sup., p. 15.

daughter,[1] whom she named with her own name, and baptized with her blessing, to the world. Lieutenant Haswell, being then engaged in the revenue service on the American station,[2] married sometime afterwards, Miss Rachel, daughter of Ebenezer and Elizabeth (Hudson) Woodward,[3] of George's island, in Boston harbor, by whom he had three sons, Robert, William, and John Montresor, an account of whom will be found in a subsequent part of this work.

The infancy of Mrs. Rowson was passed in England, under the "watch and ward" of a most faithful nurse, of whom she ever spoke in terms of grateful praise.

Having settled pleasantly with his family in a delightful valley at Nantasket, Mr. Haswell now desired to bring his little daughter to America, to be nurtured by his excellent and pious lady under his own roof; and for this purpose he returned to England in 1766, and receiving Susanna and her

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[1] In the preface to the *Trials of the Human Heart*, Mrs. Rowson says: "My mother lost her life in giving me existence." She lies buried under one of the churches in Portsmouth, England.

[2] W. Musgrave, Esq., was one of the commissioners of the customs in England, 1767.

[3] Ebenezer Woodward was the son of Smith Woodward of Dorchester. The will from which the pedigree is derived, bears the date of 1738. His daughter Mary married Hezekiah Hudson, of Cohasset, and had issue, Scarlet Hudson, born January 20, 1775.

affectionate nurse, embarked with them in October, at Deal, on board a brig bound for Boston.

The voyage was long and perilous.[1] The brig encountered the fearful storms and contrary winds of that inclement season, and the provisions failing, each passenger was finally put upon an allowance of a single biscuit, and a half a pint of water per day. Mrs. Rowson often spoke in after life of the intense thirst she then experienced, and of her bitter disappointment, when her father, with a tearful eye, presented her a cup of wine instead of water. Her faithful nurse subsisted many days on half of her own scanty allowance, affectionately reserving the other portion for her beloved Susanna, should they be reduced to a more terrible necessity. Having thus been driven to and fro by wintry storms for many weeks, and having endured the pangs of famine to the last extremity, their hearts were overwhelmed with joy when the sweet cry of "Land ahead!" was heard late in the afternoon of the 28th of January, 1767. They were approaching Boston harbor, and anticipating quick relief from their protracted sufferings; but a severer trial yet awaited them. The wind rose suddenly; the night fell darkling over the ill-fated vessel; the

[1] For a graphic description of this wintry voyage, see Mrs. Rowson's *Rebecca*, p. 152.

sleet encased the ropes in ice; the sailors were benumbed with cold; the brig became unmanageable; and to add to their dismay, they lost sight of the beacon [1] at the entrance of the harbor, and were drifting hopelessly in amongst the rocks and breakers. At ten o'clock that dreadful night, their fears were realized. Suddenly the vessel struck a rock. It proved to be upon that long, low point running out north-westwardly from Lovell's island,[2] opposite Ram's head, in Boston harbor. The floods came beating violently over deck, and there, all through that long, cold, dreary, stormy night, the little weather-beaten company remained in agony, anticipating instant death. But the good brig held together; and when the tide receded in the morning, the kind people of the island wading into the sea and placing a ladder against the side of the vessel, received the passengers and conducted them safely to the land; the rounds of the ladder, however, being soon covered with ice, Lieut. Haswell did not dare to risk his little daughter on

[1] This was the Boston lower light. There was but one lighthouse in the harbor at that period.

[2] This island, lying between Long island and the Great Brewster, is about six miles from Boston. Many ships have been wrecked upon the shoal extending from it on the north-west side. "One ketch was carried out to sea, and wrecked on Lovell's island, December 25, 1645."—*Drake's History of Boston*, p. 291.

them; and so, fastening a strong cord round her waist, he swung her out over the bulwarks of the brig into the arms of a stout old sailor, standing up to his waist in the water to receive her.

Amid such scenes of peril, Miss Susanna Haswell was receiving her first lessons in the school of human life; and though she was then but just beginning to read a few letters from the strange pages of the book of Providence, her beautiful story of *Rebecca* shows how deeply they were imprinted on the tablets of her tender heart.

CHAPTER II.

The surf-beaten rocks and green hills of Nantasket are perpetual memorials to remind us of those who first planted among them the standard of the cross.— LINCOLN.

And in our life alone does nature live.—*Coleridge.*

Hardly any spot along the irregular seaboard of our state presents to the eye more picturesque and beautiful local scenery, or awakens in the mind more interesting historical associations than the green headland of Nantasket. It stands as a bold and everlasting sentinel to guard the chief entrance to our city, and every heavy laden ship that makes our port must pass Point Allerton and have its name announced at Telegraph hill. From the verdure-crowned eminences of Nantasket, you behold upon the east the broad Atlantic, now dotted with many hundred sails and breaking in gentle murmurs along the sandy shore; now lashed to fury by the howling tempest and lifting its angry surges to the skies; towards the north and west, your eye sweeps over the green islands of Boston harbor from the lower lighthouse to Fort Warren, Rainsford's island, the upper light, and still beyond to the city sleeping like a queen of beauty in the distance; while to the south, it rests upon the pic-

turesque islands of Quincy bay and Hingham harbor. It seems to be the very centre of a little world of beauty, and every spot within the field of vision has been consecrated by events which constitute an interesting portion of the history of our nation.

As early as 1624 a settlement was made on this delightful promontory by the celebrated John Oldham,[1] and in 1630 the assessment on its inhabitants was just one pound sterling. A fort was ordered to be constructed here in 1633 and a meeting house[2] was erected the ensuing year. The name of Hull is supposed to have been given to the place from that of one of its early settlers.

The principal village is built upon a single street which winds gracefully between two gentle eminences across Nantasket head, and thence along a very narrow beach towards Point Allerton and Strawberry hill. At the period of which I write, this place contained about one hundred and fifty inhabitants, engaged principally in fishing and in agriculture, who lived in a state of primitive sim-

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[1] Killed at the great swamp fight in Narragansett, December 19th, 1675.

[2] Incorporated, May 29, 1644. It is nine miles south-east from Boston, with which it has steam boat communication. In 1860, it had two hundred and two inhabitants, and the number of voters in 1869, was seventy-five. The plan of its old fort on Telegraph hill is said to have been drawn by Lafayette.

plicity, extending a cordial hospitality to such strangers as might chance to visit their secluded village, spinning long yarns of ocean life, or discussing politics in the bar-room of the venerable Mrs. Lobden's tavern; and attending regularly every sabbath on the ministrations of the Rev. Solomon Prentice,[1] their beloved minister, whose unpretending church[2] stood on the margin of the little sheet of water in the centre of the valley.

On the day succeeding the shipwreck at Lovell's island, Lieutenant Haswell and his little daughter reached their home at Nantasket. The house[3] which they occupied is still standing. It is a large one story wooden building with a huge chimney

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[1] The Rev. Solomon Prentice was settled at Hull, on March 21st, 1768, where he continued till 1772. His predecessor, the Rev. Samuel Veazie, was ordained there in April, 1753, and dismissed in 1767.

[2] This "rustic temple" as Mrs. Rowson terms it, was blown down in what was called the great gale of September 23, 1815, since which no church edifice has been erected at Nantasket.

[3] Now owned by Matthew Hunt, Esq. It is very ancient and contains five rooms below; the posts of the house being uncovered within and the attic unfinished. The court in front is shaded with ancient apple and pear trees; while rose and lilac bushes skirt the tottering walls. In visiting this house in August, 1860, a woman brought to me a very fine looking babe, hight Eliza Josephine Carney, born March 19, 1860, which she observed was the first child born in the house for more than half a century. Mr. Clement Millaken now (1869) lives in the Haswell house. There is on a panel of one of the doors, a very curious landscape scene, said to have been painted by Lieut. Haswell himself.

in the centre, and is styled the parsonage. It is pleasantly situated upon rising land on the south side of the street, a little eastward of the ancient house of entertainment and the church. It overlooks Nantasket harbor, just beneath it, on the right; and Telegraph hill protects it from the northern blast. The quiet burial place upon the green margin of the bay is near; the sandy beach a little farther on; and indeed the fine delightful hills of Hull are all within the distance of a morning's walk. It was in this house and amid these lovely scenes that Miss Haswell passed the days of girlhood. Here her mind received its shape and coloring, and here amidst His marvelous handiwork her heart first learned to glow in adoration of her Maker. Endowed by nature with a lively fancy and a vigorous constitution, she spent much of her young life in sports and rambles over the hills and valleys of Nantasket. She collected shells and flowers, of which she was most passionately fond, upon the winding beach; she sailed out over the beautiful bay with her father in his little boat; she gathered berries, early red, upon the sunny side of Strawberry hill, and from Point Allerton she saw with glad surprise the golden tressed sun come up from the old ocean's bed, and watched the increasing sail of the proud merchantman bearing

past the headlands into port. Sometimes a shipwreck, too, upon that dangerous shore would bring to mind her own keen sufferings in the harbor, and awaken all the sympathies of her young and tender heart.

Lieutenant Haswell was a man of liberal culture. His library was, for the times, extensive, and his books well chosen. His daughter had acquired the art of reading, as by intuition; and at the age of ten, or twelve, read Dryden's Virgil, Pope's Homer, Shakespeare and Spenser,[1] fluently and understandingly; and her enunciation was remarkably, correct and pure. She loved these classic authors, and continued to peruse them with increasing interest to the end of life. Her knowledge of language was derived rather from studying elegant productions, than from the formal and technical rules of grammar and rhetoric. She also early evinced a taste for music. Her sprightliness and proficiency soon attracted the attention of our great lawyer and statesman, JAMES OTIS,[2] who usually

[1] The following passage from her *Sarah* has reference doubtless to herself: I have heard her father say that at ten years old, she read with propriety and seemed fully to comprehend all the beauties of *Pope's Homer, Dryden's Virgil,* and other works of the same tendency; Spenser and Shakespeare were great favorites with her."—P. 11.

[2] This great lawyer and statesman was born February 5, 1725; married Ruth Cunningham, 1755; made his famous plea against

spent his summers at Nantasket and who was a frequent visitor at Mr. Haswell's house.[1] He often took his little scholar, as he called her, on his knee, heard her recite poetry and instilled into her inquisitive mind those principles of liberty, of which he was one of the most eloquent advocates in America.

Living in comparative affluence, Lieutenant Haswell enjoyed the society of many other distinguished individuals, most of whom were officers of the crown,[2] with whom his little daughter was a general favorite; so that nurtured thus in this romantic spot with the bounding ocean on the one hand and the refined society of Boston on the other, her mind received those deep impressions of the external beauties of creation, gained that clear insight into human character, and developed those seeds of genius which rendered her pen so fertile and so brilliant in her subsequent life. Nor is it strange

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the Writs of Assistance, 1761; was elected to the Stamp Act congress, 1765; was beaten by the royalist Robinson, 1770; and was killed by lightning in 1783.

The house which he occupied at Hull is still standing and the study where the fires of this brilliant genius were kindled is still shown.

[1] Among his immediate neighbors were the Loring, Southen, Jones and Gould families.

[2] Speaking of this period of her life, she says: "enjoying a constant intercourse with the families of the officers of the British army and navy then stationary, eight years of my life glided imperceptibly away."— Preface to *Trials of the Human Heart*, p. 16.

at all that a bright girl growing up under such peculiar circumstances should have lent a willing ear to stories of romantic fiction and woven a paradise around her somewhat different from the actual world in which she was to play her part. Her stepmother seems to have been a pious and exemplary woman, and to have instilled into her daughter's mind the solemn sanctions and the obligations of religion.

"I was," says Mrs. Rowson, in speaking of her own education, "early accustomed to make the Bible my study and guide; and to settle all questions of morality by the sermon on the mount and by the decalogue." Could she have chosen a better standard?

CHAPTER III.

——— quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
Et quorum pars magna fui.—*Æn.*, b. II, 5.

The great drama of the American revolution was now opening. The restrictions imposed upon our trade by the unwarrantable acts of the British parliament had aroused the indignation of the colony. An appeal to arms was deemed inevitable, and as Boston was then the commercial emporium of America, it was destined to receive the first blow in the unjust aggression. Failing in the execution of the iniquitous laws against our trade, and trembling before the spirit of patriotism which the burning words of Otis, Hancock and Adams had evoked, the royal governor, Bernard, seconded by the wily Hutchinson, sends for English troops to sustain his government; and in less than two years after her arrival, Miss Haswell must have seen with her own eyes, from the highlands of Hull, the entrance of the British fleet of six ships of war,[1] with seven hundred troops into Nantasket roads.

[1] This occurred September 28, 1768. The following British vessels were then in the harbor: the Beaver, 14 guns; the Senegal, 14; the Martin, 10; the Glasgow, 20; the Mermaid, 28; the Romney, 50; the Launaston, 40; the Bonetta, 10.

From this period, until 1776, the constant arrival of British transports and men of war, the cannonading, the occasional skirmishes and collisions between the hostile parties, rendered Boston harbor one of the most animated fields of observation in the world. Miss Haswell was a daily and a central witness of the warlike preparations, floating pageantries and shifting scenes; nor was her ear inattentive to the details of the Boston massacre, to the discussion of the Boston port bill, or to the story of the destruction of the chests of tea in Boston harbor.

An officer of the crown with an American wife, Lieutenant Haswell lived, as it were, in a kind of neutrality, upon the dividing line between the contending forces. His house was the constant resort of British naval and military commanders; and his situation, as the preparations for the impending struggle advanced, became more and more critical. The arrival of the splendid fleet of Admiral Graves, however, in the summer of 1774, soon followed by the Scarborough, the Boyne, the Asia and the Somerset men of war, bearing sixty guns

Cols. Mackay and Pomroy arrived with their regiments from Cork, to protect the revenue officers, in 1768. About four thousand foreign troops arrived this year.—*John Adams.*

Col. Dalrymple took possession of Castle William, in 1770.

or more, inspired the loyalists with the hope that the provincials would be quickly brought to terms. But the mustering of soldiers in the interior, and the bloody conflict on Bunker hill, the dreadful sounds of which roll over Boston harbor, filling the Haswell family with dismay, dispel the illusion, and reveal an enemy which the veteran troops and armaments of England could not so easily intimidate.

The peninsula of Nantasket being very much exposed to the depredations of the British, the inhabitants,[1] immediately after the battle of Bunker hill, deserted their homes and fled into the interior, leaving their grain standing in the fields, and Lieutenant Haswell and his family the sole occupants of the place.

General Washington assumed the command of the American army in July, and while constructing a line of entrenchments around the town of Boston where the British were now lying in masterly inactivity, one of those daring exploits occurred in the harbor, which seems more like a romance than a reality,

[1] The general court caused the inhabitants of Hull to be removed in July, 1775, and a guard to be stationed at the entrance of the town, which remained until December of the same year. It was resolved in general court, September 9, 1776, that the guard that did duty at Hull last winter, be paid "wages and vittelling."—See *Mass. Archives*, vol. CCIX, pp. 188, 189.

and which strikingly displays the intrepidity of the provincial soldiery.

Early on Thursday morning, July 20th, two or three companies under Major Joseph Vose,[1] of Col. William Heath's regiment, went from Hingham to Nantasket, visited the house of Mr. Haswell, threw his family into great alarm, and then, dragging their boats noiselessly across the beach, rowed over the bay to the lighthouse,[2] which they set on fire about daybreak, within sight of several men of war. The British immediately sent out eight barges, a cutter and a schooner, in pursuit of them; but our men soon reached the shore without the loss of life, two only of the number being slightly wounded. "I ascended," says an eye witness, "an eminence at a distance, and saw the flames of the lighthouse ascending up to heaven like grateful incense."

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[1] Major Joseph Vose, son of Elijah, of Milton, was born in 1742. He was afterwards colonel of the first regiment of Massachusetts troops.—*Gen. Reg.*, April, 1855.

[2] The lighthouse at the entrance of Boston harbor was erected in 1715, at a cost of £2,385 17*s.* 8*d.* currency.—*Douglass*, vol. I, p. 541.

"Major Vose burnt the wooden portions of the lighthouse, brought off its furniture, lamps, etc., and the boats."—*Frothingham.* "The Americans grew so bold at length as to burn the lighthouse,..... though a man of war lay within a mile of them at the time."—*History of the War in America*, vol. I, p. 376.

Major Vose returned the next day, bringing with him a thousand bushels of barley, and a quantity of hay. It was thought then that the British would burn the town, but Lieutenant Haswell's influence probably prevented it.[1]

The British were then expecting large supplies from home, and soon began to reconstruct the lighthouse; twelve tory carpenters, guarded by thirty marines, were engaged upon the work.

On the 31st of July,[2] while a heavy cannonading was going on along the British and American lines, Major Tupper,[3] with a detachment of three hundred men, went out from Dorchester and Squantum to cut off the workmen at the lighthouse. Planting a single field piece under Major Crane upon Nantasket point to cover his retreat, he landed in good order on the island amidst the fire of the marines, killed ten or twelve men on the spot, and took the remainder prisoners. On returning, he was so hotly pursued by the barges from the men of war,

[1] *Letters of Mrs. Adams*, p. 58; *Siege of Boston*, p. 226.

[2] July 31, 1775. The George Tavern [Roxbury] was burned by the regulars, "and the house at the lighthouse by the provincials (about three hundred) who took about thirty soldiers and a number of carpenters." "Cannonade from Charlestown;" "very trying scenes."—Timothy Newell's Journal. *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, vol. I, p. 265, [4th series].

[3] Major in Col. Ward's regiment.— See *Gen. Reg.*, January, 1850, p. 68.

that he was obliged to run one boat ashore, a young man by the name of Griffin being killed, as he was rowing it. At the same time a shot from Major Tupper's one-gun battery struck and sunk one of the pursuing boats, killing several of the crew.

This action took place in the immediate vicinity and within sight of the Haswell family; and in his rapid retreat from the firing of the enemy across Nantasket point, Major Tupper left a British soldier, by the name of Daniel Carnagon, twenty-six years years old, mortally wounded in their house, promising them if he made a safe retreat, to send for him upon the morrow. He was laid upon a mattrass, and efforts were vainly made to staunch, with bandages of linen, his bleeding wounds; his life was ebbing fast; and after recounting with a faltering voice a little of his personal history[1] to the sympathizing family, and then attempting to say the Lord's prayer, he died before completing it.

Mr. Haswell and his daughter then went out, and selecting a retired spot in a corner of his garden, dug with their own hands the soldier's grave; and just as the sun's last beam was lingering on the hill

[1] He was the only son of a clergyman in the north of England, from whom he had received an excellent education. He died in the south-eastern room in the house, where traces of his blood are said to be still seen upon the floor.

above, they wrapped the body carefully in a sheet and bore it silently to its lonely resting place. Miss Haswell read with trembling voice the burial service of the church of England over it; and then the weeping family, as the evening shades were falling, laid it gently down into its narrow bed, and covering it with tender hands, left it sleeping peacefully by the moaning sea.[1]

In reference to this scene of bloodshed and of suffering, which is touchingly described in her *Rebecca*, Mrs. Rowson says: "It was a day never to be obliterated from the mind of the author, who partook of all its horror, though but just emerging from a state of childhood."

Through such scenes and trials she was developing that tender sympathy for the unfortunate, that sweet humanity, that energy of character, and that heroism which she exhibited so steadily and so beautifully to the end of life.

[1] The spot where this soldier was buried is indicated by three large apple trees, standing near the south-west corner of the garden of the parsonage.

CHAPTER IV.

"You are too near the sea-coast," said the stranger, "and may hold correspondence with the enemy."— REBECCA, p. 179.

The position of Lieutenant Haswell's little family was at this period extremely perilous. The town of Boston was in the hands of an insolent British soldiery; and British men of war, as birds of evil omen, were intently watching from different points in the harbor the operations in the American lines, and bringing, as they could, their longest guns to bear upon them.

The raids and skirmishes of the two armies to secure wood, or hay, or grain, upon the islands in the harbor, were constant, sometimes sanguinary; and the lives and property of the inhabitants of these places, as well as of the neighboring towns, were exposed to imminent peril. From its prominent position and the easy access to it either by land or water, no spot between the two armies was more directly open to attack and pillage than Nantasket; and when its people immediately after the events related in the preceding chapter, fled for safety, Lieutenant Haswell's family with the American guard remained as the sole occupants of the

place. Allied to our cause by matrimonial ties, and yet holding his commission from the king of England, this officer endeavored through these exciting scenes to maintain a kind of unobserved neutrality, and the following incident will serve to exhibit his bearing towards the Americans, as well as the goodness of his heart.

As Mr. Amos Binney and his brother Spencer, who had fled from Hull, were returning from Pettix island to bring off their flocks, a British vessel captured them, and its captain placed them at the guns. Mr. Haswell hearing of their situation visited the commander of the vessel, told him that Amos was one of the selectmen of the town of Hull; and also that he had a family dependent on him and must be released. The officers of the ship laughed at the appearance of the selectman and dismissed him; retaining however his brother Spencer until Amos with a ransom of fourteen sheep succeeded in redeeming him.

Observing the peculiar situation and bearing of Lieutenant Haswell, our officers were now induced to make favorable overtures to him to espouse the cause of liberty; but his prompt reply to them was that having served the king of England thirty years, it was now too late to take up arms against him. In those eventful times neutrality was impossible;

Mr. Haswell had too high a sense of honor to dissemble, his property was declared confiscated and himself and family, in the autumn of 1775 removed on parole by a guard of fifty men across the bay to the neighboring town of Hingham. Here they occupied a house on Lincoln street belonging at that time to Mr. Stephen Lincoln, but now to the Hon. Albert Fearing; and here they received kind and courteous attentions from Dr. Ebenezer Gay and son, from Captains John and Francis Barker, Colonel John and Deacon Joseph Thaxter, Mr. Stephen Lincoln, and other citizens of that town. They lived, however, in very humble and unpretending style as prisoners of war; and in their adversity the health of Mrs. Haswell now began to fail, while her husband's heart was sinking underneath its load of care. In this dark hour the cheerful voice and radiant smile of their young daughter often sent a gleam of sunshine through the house and raised the drooping spirits of the family. Keenly alive to the distresses of her parents, Miss Haswell not only assisted in the common labors of the scanty household, but also learned the useful art of spinning cotton, wool and flax, and often spent the livelong day in twirling her busy wheel; hearing sometimes above its monotonous hum the distant booming of the cannon from the hostile armies, and lifting up

her earnest prayer to heaven for peace. In the way of recreation, she was accustomed to visit a beautiful forest of oak trees[1] on the border of the sea, and there admire the ever changing aspects of the ocean, or sing a cheerful evening song of praise to Him who rules above it. She was here passing through those scenes and trials which she afterwards so vividly portrayed in her story of *Rebecca.*

In the autumn of 1776 a question arose in the town of Hingham respecting the support of the Haswell family, and the following petition was drawn up and sent to the general court:

"To the Honorable, the Council of the State of Massachusetts Bay in North America, and the Honorable the House of Representatives the General Assembly convened. The petition of the subscribers, a committee of Inspection and Correspondence, humbly shows: — That William Haswell, late a lieutenant of one of the king of Great Britain's ships of war, and now on half pay from the crown of Great Britain was by the order of Major General Ward about twelve months agone taken and removed from his own dwelling house in Hull, with wife, mother, and three children or family to the neighboring town of Hingham, where he has resided ever since and has been supported by the overseers of the said town till lately by order of Major General Ward. But the said Major General now declining to be any farther concerned about him, the said Haswell has made application

[1] The oak tree forest stood on land belonging now to Mr. Calvin Lincoln.

to your Honors' petitioners as a Committee aforesaid for support. Now your Honors' petitioners humbly pray the direction of your Honors how they shall conduct with respect to said Haswell and your Honors' petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.[1]

"THEOPS. CUSHING.
JNO. FEARING.
ISRAEL BEAL.
JNO. WHETCOMB.
JABEZ FISHER.

"*Hingham*, Nov. 11th, 1776."

In the house of representatives, November 26, 1776, it was

"*Resolved*, That the selectmen of the town of Hingham be and hereby are directed to take care of the within named Wm. Haswell and family, make such necessary provision for them as their circumstances require, and lay their accounts before this court until they shall receive further order.

"J. WARREN, *Speaker*."

Under the support afforded him by this resolve, Lieutenant Haswell continued his residence in the fine old town of Hingham until the winter of 1777, his daughter's mind unfolding its beauty through adversity as the precious gem through the clippings and the burnishings of the artist.

[1] See *Mass. Archives*, vol. CCXI, pp. 193, 194.

CHAPTER V.

Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head;
And this our life exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.
As You Like It, Act II.

As some apprehension was felt that in the event of an attack from the sea on the town of Boston, Lieutenant Haswell might be still in a position to render aid to the enemy,[1] it was deemed advisable that he should be removed somewhat further from the seaboard into the interior, and accordingly the following resolution was passed in the house of representatives, December 5, 1777:

"*Resolved*, That the selectmen of Hingham be and hereby are directed to remove William Haswell and family to the town of Abington, and that the selectmen of Abington are directed to receive said Haswell and family, and allow them proper support, and present them their account to this court for allowance and payment.

JOHN PITTS, *Speaker, pro tem.*[2]

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[1] Israel Beal was appointed, in 1777, to procure evidence of such persons as were suspected of being inimical to this and the United States of America in this town."—*Lincoln's History of Hingham*, p. 107.

[2] *Mass. Archives*, vol. CCXVI, p. 87.

The Haswell family arrived at Abington in destitute circumstances, at the close of the year 1777, and but for the intervention of former friends who forgot the party in the necessities of the man, would have been reduced by the chances of war, in that inclement season, to the sorest extremity. They occupied a poor old house standing alone on the outskirts of the forest, and two miles distant from any other dwelling. The father was an invalid; food and raiment were expensive; the cold was intense; the snows were deep, and the daughter aided with her own hands in bringing fuel from the forest for the family. In later times she frequently recurred to these trying scenes of her life, and with a heart overflowing with grateful emotion, rehearsed the names and the deeds of those who alleviated their distresses. In one of her works, she writes: "Dear worthy inhabitants of Hingham, when I forget the friendship that alleviated my parents' sorrows, may this heart cease to beat." [1]

In another place she speaks of the disinterested goodness of a Thaxter, a Leavitt, and a Gay,[2] and

[1] *Rebecca*, p. 181.

[2] This was the Rev. Ebenezer Gay, D.D., of Hingham, born August 26, 1696, graduated at Harvard University, 1714, and died March 18, 1787, in the sixty-ninth year of his ministry. He preached a remarkable sermon on his eighty-fifth birthday, which was reprinted in England.— See *Allen's Biog. Dict., in loco.*

in her preface to the *Trials of the Human Heart*, referring to the kindness of some American people to her parents, she most gratefully exclaims: "Would to Heaven it were in my power to render their names immortal, as my gratitude is unbounded." In the spring of 1778 the selectmen of Abington, and soon after Lieutenant Haswell himself, laid a petition before the house of representatives for his removal under a flag of truce to Halifax, and on the 30th of May it was "resolved that the said Mr. Haswell have, and he hereby has leave to depart in the first cartel for Halifax, with his wife and children, at the public expense, he giving his parole to Major General Heath, commander-in-chief of the Continental army in this department."[1] Mr. Haswell and his family were soon after conveyed in a small vessel bearing a flag of truce, to Halifax, and thence to England. Here, I have been informed, he resided for some time at Hull upon the Humber; he soon, however, removed to the vicinity of London, where misfortune still attending him, he struggled several years to give his family a respectable maintenance. His daughter, now intelligent, blooming, and versatile, sought assiduously to alleviate the burdens of her

[1] See *Mass. Archives*, vol. CCXVIII, p. 449.

parents, and eventually succeeded in obtaining a situation as a governess in a noble family, with whom she made a tour in France, and learned the elegant language of that country.

Friendless and alone, Miss Haswell went to London to seek employment as a teacher, and long and wearily she waited for a situation. From the register office, she often returned on foot, cold, hungry and penniless to her miserable home; but hope and honesty, two prime elements of success, sustained her, and at length the long sought opportunity to teach, was found.

In presenting herself to the lady who assisted her to a place, she touchingly narrated the history and condition of the Haswell family in these simple words: "My father, madam, is an officer in the army; my mother dying while I was yet an infant, my father married a lady in America who brought him an ample fortune; he took me over to America when only eight years old, and we remained there in the utmost harmony till the unhappy breach between Great Britain and her colonies. My father refusing to join the Americans, his property was confiscated, and he returned with his family to England in a distressed situation. We have been in England seven years; the family has been sickly and expensive; my poor father was involved in

debt; I could not bear the idea of adding to his expenses; I left my home, which is in the country, and came to town to a distant relation, in hopes by industry to obtain a living. This relation I have undesignedly offended, as also some who were nearer allied; my efforts to live by industry have failed, and I find myself under the necessity of seeking for service." [1]

Miss Haswell remained as a governess in a noble family until declining health compelled her for a while to cease from intellectual labor; but the instructions to the young ladies of her charge were afterwards embodied in *Mentoria.*

On returning to London she became acquainted with Mr. William Rowson, a friend of her father, who was then engaged in business as a hardware merchant, and who acted also as a trumpeter in the Royal Horse Guards.[2] To this gentleman she was, by the persuasion of her friends, united in marriage in the year 1786; and in the same year she published by subscription, and under the patronage of

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[1] *Inquisitor*, vol. II, p. 139.

[2] Mr. William Rowson was the son of an armorer to George the Third. In youth he was considered handsome; he sang agreeably, and was of convivial habits. On leaving the stage he was employed at the custom house as marine clerk, for more than a third of a century. He married a second wife whose name was Hannah S. Bancroft. "There are probably many persons," says Buckingham (*Personal Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 83), "who recollect, for no

her grace, the Duchess of Devonshire,[1] then one of the most beautiful and accomplished ladies of England, her first work, entitled *Victoria*.[2] It is in two volumes; the characters are taken from real life, and the design of the work is "to improve the morals of the female sex, by impressing them with a just sense of the merits of filial piety." It consists of a series of familiar letters interspersed with poetry, vividly portraying the condition of English society, at that period, and the fatal effects of aberration from the path of virtue. The plot is not very cleverly arranged; yet in some of the scenes we have an earnest of the success which the author was soon to achieve.

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one who heard can ever forget, the sublime and spirit stirring tones of this gentleman's trumpet, when he played for the Boston Handel and Haydn Society, the accompaniment to the magnificent air in the Messiah. 'The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised.' One might almost see the graves opening and the dust quickening into life."

[1] Her grace, the Duchess of Devonshire, 1757-1806, eldest daughter of John, first Earl of Spencer, was celebrated alike for her love of art and for her personal charms. She published *Passage of St. Gothard, Poems*, etc., and was a liberal patroness of learned men. She married William, fifth Duke of Devonshire, in 1774. "I could light my pipe," said an Irish laborer, "at her eyes."

[2] The title of the work is: "Victoria, a Novel, in two volumes. The characters taken from real life, and calculated to improve the morals of the female sex, by impressing them with a just sense of the merits of filial piety. By Susannah Haswell. London: Printed by J. P. Cooke for the author at No. 38 Tavistock street, Covent Garden, etc., 1786."

"The touching pathos," says Mr. Knapp, "of those passages in which Victoria is described as losing her reason from the cruel treatment which she receives; her plaintive sorrow when deserted, and the overpowering revulsion of feeling when restored to her first love, are worthy of the best hours of the gifted writer."

The work is elegantly dedicated to her grace, the Duchess of Devonshire, and among the subscribers' names are those of Samuel Adams, Gen. John Burgoyne, Sir Charles Middleton, Mrs. Sarah Siddons, and other celebrities of that day. In the second volume the author introduces herself in the character of Lucinda Harlow, and frequently adverts to the generosity of her distinguished patroness.

This grateful homage to her benefactress was not lost; for on the appearance of *Victoria*, the duchess introduced her protégé to the Prince of Wales, known afterwards as George the IV, who was so well pleased with the young author and her book, as to bestow a pension on her father.[1]

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[1] Writing to one of his children in 1799, he says: "I find the king in council of the 21st of September, 1796, has caused fifty lieutenants, of which I am one, to be superannuated, all to rank as commanders in his majesty's navy, which is a happy thing for us in our old age. O that your dear mother had health to enjoy the additional income it gives us."

CHAPTER VI.

Seule au bord des ruisseaux je chante sur ma lyre,
Ou le Dieu des guerriers, ou le Dieu des amans,
Et ne changerois pas pour le plus vaste empire
Ces doux amusemens.—*Madame Deshoulières*, tome I, p. 9.

Writing now, observes Mrs. Rowson, was her most pleasurable amusement; and so she gave the world in rapid succession *Mary, or the Test of Honor*, the substance of which was furnished by her bookseller; a *Trip to Parnassus; or a Critique of Authors and Performers; The Inquisitor*, or the *Invisible Rambler*, after the manner, but without the grossness of the *Sentimental Journey* of Sterne; and *Mentoria*, or the *Young Ladies' Friend*, 1791. These works exhibit alike fertility of invention, simplicity of style, and purity of heart. *The Inquisitor*, published in London, 1788,[1] in three small volumes, 8vo, is dedicated to Lady Cockburne, who had shown herself a true and generous friend of the young author. It consists of a series of pictures of London society drawn by a person, who, by placing a charmed ring upon his finger renders himself

[1] The second American edition of the *Inquisitor* was published by Matthew Carey, Philadelphia, 1794.

invisible to the parties whose conversation he reports, and whose actions, good or evil, he describes. In this, as in her other works of fancy, Mrs. Rowson introduces under fictitious names, herself and something of her eventful history.

The rambler at the printing office in volume 1, is undoubtedly Miss Haswell with the manuscript of *Victoria*, at J. B. Cooke's in Tavistock street in 1786. It is a fair specimen of the writer's manner through the book.

"'And can that young creature be an author?' said I — she was standing at the door of the printing office waiting for admission. I had rambled out that morning in search of adventures — my ring was on, I entered the office with the young author.

"'I have brought you my manuscript, Mr. C—ke,' said she; 'the story is founded on fact, and I hope will be so lucky as to please those who shall hereafter peruse it.'

"'Is it original, Miss?'

"'Entirely so.'

"'Lord bless me, that was quite unnecessary.'

"'Why, sir, how could I think of offering to the public a story which has appeared in print before?'

"'Nothing more common, I assure you.' He was a thin, pale looking man, dressed in a shabby

green coat. He never looked in her face the whole time he was speaking; but standing half sideways towards her, fixed his eyes askance upon the ground. I never like a man that is ashamed to look one in the face; it argues a consciousness of not having always acted with integrity.

"'Nothing can be more common, Miss,' continued he, 'than for an author to get a quantity of old magazines, the older the better, and having picked and culled those stories best adapted to his purpose, he places them in a little regular order, writes a line here and there, and so offers them to the public as an entire new work.

"'See here, now, I have published this work on my own account; these few first pages are original; but I assure you the scissors did the rest. I have entitled it the *Moralist*, and sell these two volumes at seven shillings and sixpence.'

"'I should rather call that compiling,' said the young author.

"'Why, so it is in fact, but I assure you there are few people who have genius sufficient to write a book; or even if they had, would take the trouble to do it. A sentimental novel will hardly pay you for time and paper. A story full of intrigue, written with levity and tending to convey loose ideas would sell very well.'

"'It is a subject unfit for a female pen,' said the young lady.

"'Why, you need not put your name to it.'

"'It is a subject unfit for any pen,' retorted she, a deep vermilion dyeing her cheeks and fire flashing from her eyes; but checking her rising passion, 'I think,' continued she, with more composure, 'the person who would write a book that might tend to corrupt the morals of youth and fill their docile minds with ideas pernicious and destructive of their happiness deserves a greater punishment than the robber who steals your purse, or the murderer that takes your life.'

"Mr. C—ke stared, it was a vacant stare; he wondered, no doubt, how an author could study anything but her own emolument. I was pleased with her sentiments. If your writings are equal to what you have just uttered, said I, they will be worth perusing * * * 'You mean to publish by subscription?' said Mr. C—ke. She replied in the affirmative.

"'And how do you mean to get subscribers?'

"'By showing my proposals and simply requesting them to encourage my undertaking.'

"'Oh, God bless me!' he replied, still looking askance, for he never changed his position, or raised his eyes from the ground except it was to look at

his elbow and contemplate his threadbare sleeve; 'it will never do to go that way to work; you must have a tale of distress to tell or you will never procure one subscriber.'

"'I am not very much distressed,' said she, 'and if I was, why should I blazon it to the world?'

"'It is no matter whether you are really distressed or not,' said C—ke, 'but you must tell a tale to excite pity or you will never gain a single shilling towards printing your books. I have sold eight hundred copies of the *Moralist* by these means. Nobody gives himself trouble to inquire whether my story be false or true. It excites pity for the moment; they send me a subscription, my purpose is answered, and it is a question whether they ever think of me or my story again.'

"She seemed tired of the conversation, so laying down her manuscript and desiring him to put it in hand immediately, she bade him good morning."[1]

Mentoria was published in Dublin in 1791, and by Robert Campbell, Philadelphia, 1794. "My design in publishing these volumes," says Mrs. Rowson, "was an anxious desire to see all my dear countrywomen as truly amiable as they are universally acknowledged beautiful; it was a wish to

[1] *Inquisitor*, vol. I, p. 52, *et seq.*

convince them that true happiness can never be met with in the temple of dissipation and folly."

In the life, letters, and stories of Helen Askham, or Mentoria, whose father fell at Quebec in 1759, the author conveys her own experience as a governess, and her idea of female education most agreeably to the world.

The *dramatis personæ* are far too numerous; yet the characters are well sustained, and the style superior to that of her preceding works. The story of George Campbell, and the eastern tale of *Urganda and Fatima*, were introduced as models of fine writing into the *Young Ladies' Guide*, one of our earliest American school reading-books published by Thomas & Andrews, Boston, 1799, and it also undoubtedly suggested to Miss Hannah Webster, author of the *Coquette*, the idea of the *Boarding School*, published by the same firm the previous year.

A single extract from the *Essay on Female Education*, in the second volume, will show something of Mrs. Rowson's views upon this subject, and furnish, perhaps, a useful hint to instructors at the present day:

"It is much to be lamented that in the present mode of educating females, the useful is entirely neglected for the more ornamental and superficial

accomplishments. There was a time, when, if the daughter of a respectable tradesman could read and write good English, handle her needle with neatness and celerity, and understand both the theory and practice of good housewifery, she was thought perfectly accomplished, and so indeed she was; as those qualifications rendered her capable of undertaking the management of a family.

"But in the present refined age, if an industrious tradesman can afford to give his daughter five hundred pounds, it is immediately settled by mama that miss must be *genteelly* educated. Accordingly, she is, at an early age, sent to a boarding school where she learns to jabber bad French and worse English; the old fashioned sampler and useful plain work are neglected, and she is instructed how to work filagree, make wafer work, daub satin, and work ill proportioned figures in cloth, which in due time are curiously mounted, and hung around to ornament the parlor of the fond, but ill judging parents. Add to these accomplishments the very fashionable one of jingling the keys of the harpsichord with great velocity, though perhaps out of time and out of tune.

"Imagine miss just returned at the age of seventeen, her mind puffed up with vanity, her head well stored with sensibility, and all the delicate

feelings to be gleaned from a circulating library, the contents of which she has eagerly and indiscriminately perused, without any one taking pains to direct her judgment or correct her taste. We will suppose her lovely in her person, and attractive in her manners. She comes home and is idolized by her too partial mother, and spoken of by her father with pride and exultation; but alas, she is too fine a lady to pay any attention to the domestic concerns of the family.

"In this foolish idea she is indulged by the mother, who thinks her dear girl's heart, sensibility and accomplishments will undoubtedly obtain her a match far superior to her present station, and she will have no occasion to be a good housewife. But these sanguine wishes are seldom, if ever, realized; and we will suppose her married to a man just entered into a genteel and improving line of business: her friends think it is a good match; her fortune is an acquisition to her husband, and they enter the career of life with all the hopes of permanent happiness, which all the hopes of peace and plenty can inspire.

"But what a wretched figure does this elegant, accomplished girl make as mistress of a family! Her servants cheat and laugh at her; her acquaintances blame her, and perhaps she even may incur

the censure of her husband, for paying no more attention to matters which so nearly concern his interest.

"Has she children? She knows not how to make or mend their clothes; she is always surrounded with difficulties from which she knows not how to extricate herself, and ashamed to confess her ignorance to any one who could instruct her in the point she requires, she becomes selfish and dissatisfied; neglects even those accomplishments which she formerly strove so hard to attain; becomes negligent in her dress, careless in her manners, and sinks into a very blank in creation.

"Her husband, disappointed in not seeing that order and regularity at home which he had once fondly hoped, no longer finds any charms in her society, and seeks to forget his disappointment, either in the bottle, or at the gaming table, both equally destructive, and she sees inevitable ruin approaching, without the smallest power to ward off the blow.

"Nor can the whole universe present us with an object more truly deserving our pity, than such a woman in a state of penury. She is at loss how to perform even the necessary duties of life; she cannot exert herself to obtain even a single meal for herself and children; she pines in obscu-

rity, regretting her useless education, and wishes that the sums so expended had been laid by to increase her fortune, and she herself had been only instructed in those things which would have tended ultimately to render her a useful and respectable member of society."[1]

As an old Grecian educator once said of boys, Mrs. Rowson believed of girls, that they should learn while young just what they were to practice when grown up; and although her course of instruction might appear too limited for the present age, her idea that the light and fanciful should give place to the solid and substantial, every intelligent parent will undoubtedly accept.

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[1] *Mentoria*, Dublin ed., p. 247.

CHAPTER VII.

Io canterei d'amor si novamente
Ch'al duro fianco il di mille sospiri
Trarrei per forza.—*Petrarcha*, son. ci.

In 1790, Mrs. Rowson, then in her twenty-eighth year, published in London, *Charlotte Temple; or, a Tale of Truth*, which at once engaged the attention of the public, and established her reputation as one of the ablest female writers in the department of literature she had chosen. It is a tale of sentimental fiction founded on fact; the hero, Montraville, being in reality, it is said, Col. John Montresor, who, while in service in the British army in 1774, persuaded Miss Charlotte Stanley, a young lady of great personal beauty, and daughter of a clergyman, who, it is affirmed, was a younger son, or of the family of the Earl of Derby, one of England's proudest peers, to leave her home and embark with him and his regiment for New York, where he most cruelly abandoned her, as Mrs. Rowson faithfully and tragically relates. She died at the age of nineteen years, and was buried in the grave-yard of Trinity church, New York, where the inscription of her name upon a long, moss covered slab, within a few feet of the

living tide that surges through Broadway, may still be read.[1]

"I had the recital," says Mrs. Rowson, in speaking of Charlotte Temple, in her introduction to the *Trials of the Human Heart*, from the lady whom I introduce under the name of Beauchamp, I was myself personally acquainted with Montraville; and from the most authentic sources, could now trace his history from the period of his marriage to within a very few late years; a history which would tend to prove that retribution treads upon the heels of vice, and that though not always apparent, yet even in the midst of splendor and prosperity, conscience stings the guilty, and

Puts rankles in the vessels of their peace.

Charlotte Temple is not then a creation of fancy, but a faithful transcription of real life, in 1774, and hence it is a living book, and criticise it as we may, the people after all will read it, weep over it and enjoy it. It appeals to the tenderest sentiments of the

[1] On her return to this country in 1793, Mrs. Rowson visited the grave of Charlotte Temple, and the house in which she died. It is said that the monumental tablet in Trinity church yard originally bore the quarterings of the noble house of Derby, and that the name of Charlotte Temple has been substituted for that of Charlotte Stanley. The Old Tree House, a part of which is still standing on the corner of Pell and Doyers streets, New York, is said to be the place in which the tragical death of Charlotte occurred.

human heart, and sweeps across the chords of feeling as the evening breeze across the strings of the Æolian harp. It exhibits passages of beautiful description, as the one commencing; "It was a fine evening in the beginning of autumn;" of tender pathos, as the visit of Mr. Temple to Fleet prison, the sorrows of a mother, and the death of Charlotte; of moral sublimity, as the agonizing struggles of a wounded conscience. The character of an intriguing, heartless teacher is well portrayed in that of Madam De la Rue, and that of a fiendish libertine in that of Belcour. As to Montraville, his course and character may perhaps be too favorably described; his punishment too light; but in him, we must recollect, the writer was dealing with an acquaintance, if not a distant relative of the Haswell family; nor had he, when the book was written, finished his career.

The plot of the story is as simple and as natural as Boileau himself could desire; the denouement comes in just at the right time and place; and the reader's interest is enchained, as by magic, to the very last syllable of the book. A question has been raised as to the moral tendency of this work. I will attempt to answer it only by observing that it is a simple record of events as they transpired, as truthful as Macaulay's sketch of Charles the First, or of La-

martine's Columbus; and that whatever objection one might urge against it on the ground of immorality, might, with equal force, be brought against some of our very best works of history and biography. But let the decision be what it may, it seems quite certain that Mrs. Rowson wrote the story with the purest motive. She had seen something of the scandalous lives of the British land and naval officers of that period, and she determined to warn her fair countrywomen of their seductive arts. The bishop of London would have taken another course; but his voice would have failed to reach, as her cunning fingers did, the secret springs of the heart of the people.

Charlotte Temple is a literary curiosity. Twenty-five thousand copies[1] were sold within a few years after its publication, and editions almost innumerable have appeared both in England and America. During the first quarter of the present century, this

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[1] "The most popular of her works was *Charlotte Temple, a Tale of Truth*, over which thousands have 'sighed and wept, and sighed again,' which had the most extensive sale of any work of the kind that had been published in this country, twenty-five thousand copies having been sold in a few years."—*Personal Memoirs of Joseph T. Buckingham*, vol. I, p. 82.

"The tears of many thousand readers have borne ample testimony to the power and pathos of this work."—*Memoir of Mrs. Rowson*, by Samuel L. Knapp, Esq., prefixed to *Charlotte's Daughter*.

little book distanced in popular favor, Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto;* Henry Mackenzie's *Man of Feeling;* Ann Radcliffe's *Romance of the Forest*, published 1791; Regina Maria Roche's *Children of the Abbey;* Frances Burney's celebrated *Evelina;* and every other competitor in the field; and it was not until the *Great Wizard of the North* began to enchain our attention, that the pathetic history of Charlotte Temple found a rival in the hearts of the people; and even now it is more than probable that a greater number of persons could be found in America who have perused this book, than *Waverley* itself.

It has stolen its way alike into the study of the divine and into the workshop of the mechanic; into the parlor of the accomplished lady and the bedchamber of her waiting maid; into the log-hut on the extreme border of modern civilization and into the forecastle of the whale ship on the lonely ocean. It has been read by the grey-bearded professor after his "divine Plato;" by the beardless clerk after balancing his accounts at night; by the traveler waiting for the next conveyance at the village inn; by the school girl stealthfully in her seat at school. It has beguiled the woodman in his hut at night in the deep solitudes of the silent forest; it has cheated the farmer's son of many an hour while poring over its fascinating pages, seated on

the broken spinning wheel in the old attic; it has drawn tears from the miner's eye in the dim twilight of his subterranean dwelling; it has unlocked the secret sympathies of the veteran soldier in his tent before the day of battle.

A great warm loving heart guided the fingers which portrayed the picture, and that is power; and ply the rules of rhetoric as we may, the people feel the power and they acknowledge it. The common mind of the common people is after all the true arbiter of the merit of the works of genius. This sanctions Homer, Shakespeare, Le Sage, Cervantes, Bunyan, Burns, Goldsmith; this sanctions the *Aminta*, the *Gentle Shepherd*, *Paul et Virginie*, *Charlotte Temple;* this sanctions *Guy Mannering* and the *Pilot;* this sanctions power!

The plaintive song of the heroine in the twentieth chapter is in Mrs. Rowson's happiest vein:

I.

Thou glorious orb, supremely bright
Just rising from the sea,
To cheer all nature with thy light,
What are thy beams to me?

II.

In vain thy glories bid me rise
To hail the new born day;
Alas! my morning sacrifice
Is still to weep and pray.

III.

For what are nature's charms combined
To one whose weary breast
Can neither peace nor comfort find,
Nor friend whereon to rest?

IV.

Oh, never, never, whilst I live
Can my heart's anguish cease;
Come friendly Death, thy mandate give
And let me be at peace.

In *Charlotte's Daughter, or the Three Orphans; a Sequel to Charlotte Temple*, a posthumous story by Mrs. Rowson published in 1828, she traces the life of Lucy Blakeney,[1] the orphan child of Charlotte Temple, through a variety of strange, but real scenes to the verge of a matrimonial alliance with Lieutenant Franklin, son of Col. Montraville, and her half brother, whose name, as well as her own, had been changed in infancy, and whose relationship was therefore to each other unknown. A miniature of the mother of Lucy prevents the fatal step. Lieutenant Franklin shows it to his wretched father as a picture having some resemblance to the lady of his choice. The colonel seizing it exclaims: "It is, it is come, again to blast my vision in my last hour!

[1] Supposed to have been adopted by Lt. Col. Grice Blakeney, of the 14th Royal Dragoons.

The woman you would marry is my own daughter! Just Heaven! oh that I could have been spared this. Go, my son, go to my private desk; you will there find the record of your father's shame and your own fate! Nature was exhausted by the effort. He fell back on the bed supported by his trembling wife, and in a few moments the wretched Franklin, the once gay, gallant, happy Montraville, was no more." (*Charlotte's Daughter*, p. 147.) The remaining days of Lucy Blakeney are spent in acts of charity and devotion. The style of *Charlotte's Daughter* is for the most part finished and beautiful; the story is well contrived, and the moral bearing healthful. A single brief sketch of a celebrated locality in England will serve as a specimen of the elegant passages in which the work abounds:

"Edward's estate was in the neighborhood of the romantic vale of Keswick. The mansion lately inhabited by his uncle, was an old-fashioned, but comfortable house, situated on the southern declivity of the mountain Skiddaw, with a beautiful garden and extensive, but uneven grounds, laid out in a style entirely suited to the surrounding scenery. The view from the balcony in front of the house was one of singular beauty and sublimity. A long valley stretched away to the south, disclosing in the

distance the still glassy surface of Derwent-water, and terminated by the bold and fantastic mountains of Borrowdale. On the east, the lofty steeps of Wallow-crag and Lodore seemed to pierce the very clouds; whilst the towering heights of Newland bounded the view to the west, displaying the picturesque varieties of mountain foliage and rocks. The cottages and farm houses of his tenants were scattered about in such points of view as to afford a pleasing sort of embellishment to the landscape. Many of them were composed of rough, unhewn stone, and roofed with thick slates, and both the coverings and sides of the houses were not unfrequently overgrown with lichens and mosses as well as surrounded with larches and sycamores." (P. 166.)

This volume is preceded by an excellent memoir of the author from the practiced pen of Samuel L. Knapp, Esq., who, in speaking of her as a novel writer, very sensibly observes: "It is no trifling merit that she should have drawn her characters and incidents directly from life, when it was the prevailing fashion of writers of fiction to riot exclusively in the regions of fancy; nor is it less to her praise that in an age of false sentiment and meretricious style, she should have relied for success on the unpretending qualities of good sense, pure morality and unaffected piety." (*Memoir*, p. 17.)

CHAPTER VIII.

Truth is stranger than fiction.

In 1792 another agreeable story from the fertile pen of Mrs. Rowson, appeared in London under the title of *Rebecca: or, the Fille de Chambre.* For this, as for most of her other works of fancy, the materials were drawn from scenes in her own checkered life, or from those in the lives of her own kinsmen and acquaintances. Her drama revolves around herself as the enlightening centre; and she might almost say of every part as old Æneas did of the sack of Troy:

> ——— quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
> Et quorum pars magni fui.—*Æn.* II, 5.

In the introductory chapter to a revised edition of *Rebecca*, published some twenty years afterwards, 1814, Mrs. Rowson speaks with tenderness of revisiting the scenes of Hingham and Nantasket, where she had experienced so much kindness at the hands of the people in the days of her girlhood and affliction, and says: "The scenes in her [Rebecca's]

father's family, previous to her leaving it; those at Lord Ossiter's; the distress at sea [to which I have already adverted]; the subsequent shipwreck; the burning of the Boston lighthouse; the death of the poor marine; the imprisonment of the family; the friendship experienced by them in the most distressed circumstances; the removal farther into the country, and exchange to Halifax, are events which really took place between the years 1769 and 1788, though the persons here mentioned as sufferers are fictitious."

The plot of *Rebecca* is not as well contrived as that of *Charlotte Temple;* the unity not so well sustained; nor are the characters, if we except that of Rebecca,[1] so ably drawn; yet it will ever be interesting as a faithful picture of English and American life in the days of the revolution, as a record of the trials and privations which the author herself experienced in early years, upon our guarded coast, and of the troubles no less serious which she met with while a governess at Lord Ossiter's.

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[1] "It is hardly assuming too much to say," observes Mr. Knapp, in his memoir, "that Rebecca is one of the best drawn female characters in modern fiction. Not only the stronger traits, but all the nicer shades, the innocent foibles and amiable weaknesses of women, are given with a truth which discovers a careful study of female manners, and a thorough acquaintance with the human heart."

The affair at the Boston lighthouse, and the death and burial of the marine, are thus graphically described:

"The terrified inhabitants of Nantasket left the village and took refuge in the interior parts of the country, all but Mr. Abthorpe's [Haswell's] family, who still remained, though deserted by all their servants; for the colonel had too high a regard for his royal master to join the cause of his enemies, and it was impossible to join the British troops without relinquishing all his property; he therefore hoped the storm would soon pass over; that some method would be proposed and accepted to conciliate matters, and in the meantime he wished to remain neutral.

"It was a still morning about the latter end of July, when Rebecca, being disturbed by some little rustling at her window, raised her head, and by the faint dawn that just glimmered from the east, discovered armed men placed around the house. Alarmed, she started from her bed and awoke Miss Abthorpe; they threw a few clothes over them and flew to the colonel's apartments. They were met by Mrs. Abthorpe who caught her daughter in her arms and pointed to the room where they usually slept, crying: 'Look, Sophia, your poor father.'

"Miss Abthorpe looked and beheld two soldiers with firelocks, who, placed at the door of the apartment, held her father prisoner.

"'Ah, my dear mother,' said she, 'who are these and what are they going to do? Surely, they will not murder us!'

"'Don't frighten yourselves,' said one of the men, 'we don't usually murder such pretty girls.'

"'But my father,' cried she eagerly, 'what do you intend to do with him?'

"'Set him at liberty again when our expedition is over.'

"Rebecca now learnt that these were a part of the American army who had come to Nantasket in whale boats with a design of dragging their boats across the beach before mentioned, and proceeding to the lighthouse at the entrance of the harbor, intending to destroy it in order to mislead the expected relief that was coming to Boston, which was at the time besieged by the American army and in possession of the British. They had before made an unsuccessful attempt to demolish this lighthouse, and were now come resolved not to leave their work unfinished. Accordingly they proceeded as quietly as possible to the beach, almost carried their boats over, and arrived totally unexpected at the little island on which the lighthouse

stood and which was guarded by a party of marines. A smart skirmish ensued; but the Americans were too numerous to be withstood by so small a party, the whole of which were either killed or taken prisoners, and having completed their design returned to Nantasket victorious, though in the utmost consternation for fear of being pursued by boats from the Lively frigate and other ships that lay in the harbor.

"Rebecca was standing at a window as they relanded, the tears streaming down her pale face, and so entirely absorbed in terror that she was inattentive to the surrounding objects. From this state of torpor she was aroused by a deep groan, and raising her eyes saw two Americans entering the house, bearing between them a wounded marine whom they laid on the floor, and were preparing to depart when Mrs. Abthorpe rushed out of the adjoining apartment.

"'What are you doing?' said she, 'you will not surely leave him here.'

"'He is in our way,' cried a watch; 'if he don't die quickly, we will kill him.'

"'Oh, do not kill me;' cried the almost expiring soldier, 'I am not fit to die.'

"At this moment Major Tupper entered. Mrs. Abthorpe addressed him in a supplicating accent: 'we can procure the poor soul no assistance,' said

she, 'he will perish for want of proper applications to staunch the blood.'

"'My dear madam,' said the major, 'what can we do? we fear pursuit and must retreat as fast as possible; and should we take him with us, in our hurry and confusion, he would perhaps be precipitated into eternity. If we make a safe retreat, I will send for him to-morrow.'

"He then departed, and Col. Abthorpe being now at liberty turned his thoughts towards the wounded soldier.

"He had fainted; a mattrass was laid on the floor, and as they all united in endeavoring to lift him upon it, the motion increased the anguish of his wounds and recalled his languid senses.

"'Oh spare me, do not kill me!' said he, looking around with a terrified aspect.

"'Be comforted,' said the colonel; 'you are among friends who will do all in their power to save your life.'

"'God will reward you,' said he, faintly. They now examined the wound and found from its depth and situation that a few hours would terminate the existence of the poor sufferer; however they made long bandages of linen, and with pledgets dipped in spirits endeavored to staunch the bleeding, but in vain.

"'I am very faint,' said he.

"Rebecca knelt and supported him in her arms, assisted by the weeping Sophia.

"'Can I live, think you, sir?' said he, looking in the colonel's face.

"'I fear not,' was the reply.

"'God's will be done,' said he, 'but I have a long account to settle, and but a short time to do it in. Dear good Christians pray with me—pray for me. Alas, it is dreadful to die and with the weight of murder on my conscience.'

"Here he grew faint again and ceased to speak.

"A cordial was administered—he revived.

"'You see before you, my friends,' said he, 'a most unhappy man, the victim of his own folly. My father is a clergyman in the north of England; I am his only child, and have received from him an education suitable to the station in which he meant to have placed me, which was the church; but alas! I despised his precepts and joined myself to a set of the most dissolute companions, with whom I ran into every species of vice and debauchery. By repeated extravagance, I involved my poor father, who, no longer able to supply my exorbitant demands, remonstrated against my way of life; but I was too much attached to vice to resolve to quit it, and in a fit of desperation,

having lost more money than I could pay, I enlisted in a regiment bound to this place. Oh, sir, I have reason to think my conduct shortened my dear mother's existence, and I have embittered the last hours of a father whom it was my duty to comfort and support. These are heavy clogs upon my departing soul, but he who witnesseth the sincerity of my repentance, I trust will compassionate and pardon me.'

"'No doubt of it,' cried Rebecca, whose heart was almost bursting as she listened to the expiring penitent.

"He looked around, and fixing his eyes on Rebecca and Sophia, 'poor girls,' said he, 'you are but young; take the advice of a dying sinner and treasure it in your memories. Obey your parents; never forsake them, and shun vicious company; for had I done this it would have been well for me in this evil day.'

"Rebecca's susceptible heart smote her; she hid her face with her handkerchief, and sighed deeply.

"'God forever bless you my friends,' said he, 'I am going; a few pangs more and all will be over. Oh may he whose fatal aim took my life have it not remembered against him; may the father of mercy forgive him as freely as I do.'

"He then commenced the Lord's prayer, but expired before he could finish it.

"'Peace be to his repentant spirit,' said the colonel, as he raised his weeping daughter from her knees.

"'His poor father,' said she, 'what would he feel did he know this!'

"'He felt more,' replied the colonel, 'when the misguided youth forsook the paths of virtue, than he would, could he even behold him now.'

"The heat at this season of the year is intense, and the colonel knew the body of the unhappy soldier must that day be consigned to the earth, yet how to make the grave, or how to convey the corpse to it when made, were difficulties which he could hardly think it possible to surmount; but sad necessity enforced the attempt. He fixed on a retired spot just by the side of his garden, and began the melancholy task. Rebecca and Sophia, with their delicate hands, attempted to assist, and by evening they had completed it.

"The faint rays of the setting sun just tinged the summit of the highest hill; the sky was serene, and scarce a breeze was heard to move the leaves or ruffle the smooth surface of the water. Awfully impressive was the silence that reigned through this once cheerful village.

"As the colonel sat pensively considering his situation, and thinking how in the decentest manner possible he could render the last sad duties to the deceased, he saw a small fishing boat with one man in it, drawing near the shore. He ran hastily down, entreated him to land, and assist him in his mournful office.

"The body was carefully wrapped in a sheet, it was impossible to obtain a coffin.

"'We have no clergyman,' said the colonel, 'but the prayers of innocence shall consecrate his grave.'

"He gave the prayer book to Sophia; she opened it, and with her mother and Rebecca, followed the body. She began the service, but her voice faltered, the tears burst forth, she sobbed, and could no longer articulate. The colonel took it from her; he was a man of undaunted courage in the day of battle, but even here his heart sank and his voice was tremulous; but he recalled his fortitude, and finished the solemn rite in a becoming manner." [1]

"This was a day," says Mrs. Rowson, in a foot note to this passage, "never to be obliterated from the mind of the author, who partook of all its hor-

[1] *Rebecca*, p. 164.

rors, though but just emerging from a state of childhood."

The journey of the Haswell family from Hingham to Abington, about nine miles distant, in the autumn of 1777, and the hardships then experienced are thus vividly recounted:

"'And must we leave this place my dear father,' said Sophia, coming from a small adjoining apartment, whither she had retired to indulge the tears she was no longer able to restrain; must we be separated from those friends whose generous attentions have lightened all our afflictions?'

"'We must, Sophia,' said her father, rather sternly, 'to-morrow morning.'

"'Ah! me,' said the weeping girl, turning to Rebecca and resting her head on her shoulder.

"'Do not grieve thus, my dear Sophia,' said our heroine, 'for though separated from your friends, you will still live in their remembrance and they in yours.'

"'Yes,' cried Sophia, with a look of grateful rapture, 'ever while the vital tide nourishes my heart. Dear worthy inhabitants of Hingham, when I forget the friendship that alleviated my parents' sorrow, may that heart cease to beat.'

"The next morning, just as the gray dawn began to enliven the east, Mr. Abthorpe's family were

called to begin their journey. An open chaise, drawn by a miserable horse, was all the conveyance provided for Mrs. Abthorpe, Sophia and Rebecca; the colonel himself was expected to walk. About nine o'clock in the morning they set out; but the road was so heavy, and the horse so old and lame, that though they had only a journey of fifteen miles to make, they had not completed it at four in the afternoon. The darkness of the night began to envelop every object, when the chaise stopped at a hut that could scarcely be called habitable. Rebecca and Sophia assisted Mrs. Abthorpe to alight. Gloomy as was the outward appearance of their destined habitation, the inside served only to increase their horror. It consisted of three rooms; the windows had once been glazed, but were now, some parts open, and others mended with wood. One room indeed was boarded; the others had only the ground for a floor.

"There were two chimneys, large and dreary, in which no trace of fire appeared; all was desolate and gloomy.

"It was now quite dark and the colonel had not yet arrived. Rebecca and Sophia felt around the damp, solitary rooms for something on which Mrs. Abthorpe might sit down; for she was faint and weary from taking no refreshment during their

tedious journey, and having been exposed to the intense cold so many hours; but their search was in vain; no seat could be found; they took off their own cloaks and laid them on the floor; on these she sank weak and exhausted, and in spite of her accustomed fortitude, suffering nature wrung from her a few complaints. Rebecca and Sophia knelt beside her and supported her; the voice of comfort no longer issued from their lips; their sighs responsive answered hers; their tears mingled as they fell; but all remained silent.

"They heard footsteps approach; the colonel's well known voice saluted their ears.

"'Dry your eyes, my dear girls,' said Mrs. Abthorpe, let us not increase his sorrows, whose every pang is doubled by our sufferings.'

"The colonel entered—some one accompanied him, for they could hear more than one footstep.

"'We shall have a fire soon,' said the colonel, 'it is a very cold evening.'

"'But I am well wrapped up and do not feel it,' said Mrs. Abthorpe.

"His heart thanked her, though it refused to believe her assertion.

"Just then a third person entered and threw down an armful of wood, when the person, who had accompanied the colonel, produced a tinder box,

and striking a light discovered to the astonished females the sons of two of their best friends.[1]

"'Mr. Lane!' 'Mr. Barker,'[2] involuntarily burst from all their lips; but the generous young men would not hear a word of praise or thanks. They soon cheered the solitary mansion with a comfortable fire, and in the meantime a small cart arrived with two beds, a few chairs and some kitchen utensils. From a basket in this cart the young men produced a couple of fowls, some butter, bread, and two bottles of wine, so that in less than two hours from their first melancholy entrance, our distressed family were sitting in homely wise around an old wainscot table before a large fire partaking of a plentiful supper, while their hearts expanded with gratitude to that good Providence who had thus raised them up friends when least expected.

"The next morning the young men exerted themselves to repair the breaches in the windows and to stop the large crevices in the doors of the house. Having to the utmost of their power lessened the troubles of the family and rendered it tolerably

[1] Mr. David Andrews drove the team which carried Lieutenant Haswell's goods from Hingham to Abington. They passed through Weymouth, and the house in Abington to which they came stood about one half mile from the church.

[2] Gen. John Barker and Capt. Peter Lane, of Hingham.

comfortable, they departed, leaving behind them some meat, bread, butter, cheese, and a small parcel of tea and sugar; but as the last named articles were at that time extremely scarce they could not be so liberal as their expanded hearts led them to wish.

"Oh! with what rapture must the parents of such young men have received them after such a journey, to which they had been excited by motives of purest benevolence.

"Blest spirits of philanthropy, the hearts of whom ere discord shook her baneful wings and shed her influence over your happy plains, felt not a pang but for another's woe, and whose first pleasure was to alleviate the sorrow of a suffering fellow creature! May the arrows of affliction with which she has since wounded you, be drawn forth by the hand of sympathizing friendship; and the anguish obliterated by the remembrance of your own good deeds!

But to return. The habitation to which Colonel Abthorpe had been thus suddenly removed was situated on the skirts of an extensive wood. The face of the country was rocky and dreary, to which unpromising appearance the snow and ice not a little contributed. There was but one habitation within two miles of them and that was occupied by people, if possible more wretched than themselves.

In this dismal situation, with no amusement but what sprang from themselves, for they had not even the consolation of books, did the colonel and his family pass four wearisome months, during which time they had often no food but coarse Indian bread and potatoes, nor any firing but what Sophia and Rebecca assisted each other to bring in their delicate arms from the adjacent woods, for the colonel was a great part of that time confined to the house by the gout, and in their daily excursion to procure this necessary appendage to the support of life in so cold a climate, they had no covering to their feet, which often bled from the intenseness of the cold, or from incisions made by the rugged path over which they were obliged to pass." [1]

The following easy and graceful song in *Rebecca*, seems worthy of transcription :

I.

Aurora, lovely, blooming, fair!
Unbarred the eastern skies ;
While many a soft pelucid tear
Ran trickling from her eyes.

II.

Onward she came with heartfelt glee,
Leading the dancing hours ;
For though she wept, she smiled to see
Her tears refresh the flowers.

[1] *Rebecca*, p. 180, *et seq.*

III.

Phœbus, who long her charms admired
With bright, refulgent ray
Came forth, and as the maid retired
He kissed her tears away.

IV.

So youth advances, mild, serene;
Our childish sorrows cease;
While hope's gay sunshine gilds the scene,
And all is joy and peace.

CHAPTER IX.

May I come forward? Do I friends behold?
Mrs. Amelia Opie's Epilogue to the Curfew.

While Mrs. Rowson was engaged in these delightful literary pursuits, having, as she says, few duties to perform, and many leisure hours, her husband, through the mismanagement of his American partner, became a bankrupt. In her generous efforts to aid her father's family, she herself had exhausted her patrimonial estate, and although the sale of her works had already become quite extensive, she realized but limited returns for them.

Now what was to be done? How could the ruined fortunes be retrieved? How and where indeed could bread and raiment for the day be found? was the sharp question. Writing for the press in London would not give it; teaching had been tried; but then no place for it could be commanded; there was no capital for recommencing trade. The hour was dark; but Mrs. Rowson had already taken lessons in adversity, and her courageous heart was not to be dismayed. What are the talents of the family? Mr. Rowson was a musician, the master of a band; his voice was good, and he could sing a merry song effectively.

He had a sister Charlotte, then about fourteen years old, whom Mrs. Rowson had adopted, and who had a sprightly manner and a pleasant voice; Mrs. Rowson herself had a face beaming with expression, an easy and polite manner, and retentive memory. She read, or sang, or played the harpsichord, or guitar, or improvised a song or speech with equal skill and beauty.

It was, therefore, finally resolved, though not without misgivings, to attempt to gain a livelihood on the stage. To this end they entered into an engagement with Mrs. ———, and made their first appearance on the boards at Edinburgh, in the winter of 1792–3; they also performed that season in several of the larger towns in England. Mrs. ———, however, proved to be a worthless character, failed to fulfill her contract with the Rowson family, and thus plunged them into straits and difficulties still more serious.

But the laconic motto of the Haswell family is *Tant que je puis*, as much as I can; and in accordance with it, an engagement was soon effected with Mr. Thomas Wignell, who had leased the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, and who was spending the summer of 1793 in England, gathering his celebrated company for America.

On arriving with his troupe of performers at Philadelphia, in September,[1] of the same year, and finding that the yellow fever was driving the people from the city, he repaired immediately to Annapolis, Md., where Mr. Rowson, his wife and sister Charlotte, first appeared upon the American boards. They were quite successful in light comedy, vaudeville and opera; and returning to Philadelphia on the abatement of the fever, performed occasionally in that city and in Baltimore, the two following seasons. Although fulfilling the exhausting duties of an actress, Mrs. Rowson did not allow her pen to remain unemployed. She wrote at this period the *Slaves in Algiers*, an opera, which drew forth a severe critique from Peter Porcupine, the celebrated William Cobbett, and in 1794, the *Volunteers*, a farce founded on the famous whiskey insurrection which occurred in western Pennsylvania that year; and still another play called the *Female Patriot*,[2] altered from one of Philip Massen-

[1] "In 1793, Mr. Wignell, who formerly belonged to the old company, arrived with a number of excellent performers, from England, who commenced their career the following winter, in the new theatre in Chestnut street, which had been recently built by a company, upon a tontine principle."—*The Picture of Philadelphia*, by James Mease, M.D., p. 329.

[2] Performed at the new theatre, Philadelphia, 1795. See James-Ree's *Dramatic Authors of America*, p. 114.

Mrs. Rowson performed before Washington, who attended the

ger's, together with several odes, epilogues and songs, which appeared in the periodicals of that day.

One of her pieces written at this time was set to music by Mr. Carr, and extensively sung. It was published by S. G. Willig, Philadelphia.[1]

In Vain is the Verdure of Spring.

I.

Restrained from the sight of my dear,
No object with pleasure I see;
Though thousands around me appear,
The world's but a desert to me.

II.

In vain is the verdure of spring,
The trees look so blooming and gay;
The birds as they whistle and sing
Delight not when William's away.

III.

Reclined by a soft murmuring stream,
I weeping disburthen my care;
I tell to the rocks my sad theme
Whose echo soothes not my despair.

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theatre five or six times during the season, 1794. His favorite plays were the *School for Scandal, Every one has his Fault,* the *Poor Soldier,* and Wignell's *Darby.— Lossing's Recollections of Washington.*

[1] The music by Mr. Carr: Printed by G. Willig, Philadelphia, before 1799.

IV.

Ye streams that soft murmuring flow,
Convey to my love every tear;
Ye rocks that resound with my woe,
Repeat my complaints in his ear.

While residing in Baltimore in 1795, she wrote a spirited poetical address to the army of the United States, entitled the *Standard of Liberty*, which was admirably spoken on the stage by the celebrated Mrs. Whitlock, in presence of the military companies of the city. She published, also, this year at Philadelphia, her largest and most elaborate, though perhaps least popular work, which she named the *Trials of the Human Heart.*[1] It was printed in four volumes, by subscription, and dedicated to Mrs. Bingham, April 19, 1795. Among the names of the subscribers are those of Franklin, Mrs. Washington, Matthew Carey, Gen. Jeremiah

[1] *Trials of the Human Heart*, a novel in four volumes, by Mrs. Rowson, of the new theatre, Philadelphia, author of *Charlotte, Fille de Chambre, Inquisitor*, etc., etc.:

——— If there's a power above us—
And that there is all nature cries aloud
Through all her works, he must delight in virtue.
The soul secured in its existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.

Philadelphia: Printed for the author, by Wrigley & Berriman, No. 149 Chestnut street, sold by Messrs. Carey, Rice, Campbell, Ormrod, Young, and the author, corner of Seventh and Chestnut streets, 1795.

Wadsworth, and of other well known characters. The work consists for the most part of a series of letters written in a discursive, often sentimental style, from Meriel Howard to Celia Shelburne, in which the author leads her heroine through many trying and perplexing scenes, as a daughter, wife and mother, "tempering the weakness of humanity with the patience and fortitude of a Christian." The scene is laid mostly in London and vicinity, and the time of the action runs from April 20, 1775, to September 29, 1791. The sorrows of Meriel arise chiefly from infidelity, scandal and penury; trials which the author herself experienced. The *dramatis personæ* are by far too numerous; the plot is carelessly constructed, and the general drift of thought and sentiment, is similar to that of the leading female novelists of that period among whom Mrs. Rowson mentions [vol. IV, 74], Mrs. Frances Burney, Mrs. Bennet, and Misses Sophia and Harriet Lee, as her especial favorites. The moral bearing of the work, however, is healthful, as the following brief extract in tone and keeping with the author's main design may serve to indicate.

"I will have my hours of peace and retirement: for in my opinion, the life that is spent in a continued round of insipid pleasures, is not only entirely useless to society, but in some measure

guilty; as we can have no time for the performance of those duties which are incumbent on every professor of Christianity; nor do I think, as many do, that people of a certain rank in life may pass their time in any way most agreeably to themselves, and that they are not accountable for it to any one. We certainly are answerable to One who will demand an account of our stewardship at a time when no evasion whatever will serve our turn, and the more elevated our station, the more careful we should be to set examples worthy the imitation of our inferiors: examples that may inspire all who know us with the love of virtue." [1]

We cannot forbear transcribing from this work a sacred lyric which does honor alike to the author's head and heart. It is thus gracefully introduced:

"The moon shone through the windows full upon an organ which was placed there for me to entertain myself with, and as I am fond of solemn music, the stillness of the evening and the serenity of every surrounding object inspired me with a wish to touch the instrument. I therefore sat down, and following the impulse of my soul, began the following:

[1] Vol. III, p. 54.

Hymn to Gratitude.

I.

Where'er I turn my raptured eyes,
New scenes of beauty round me rise,
  My heart exulting glows;
And while I view the wondrous whole,
To the Creative Power my soul,
  With gratitude o'erflows.

II.

Yon burning orbs, that round the pole,
In solemn, grand succession roll,
  Declare their Maker's power;
Then while such glories deck the sky,
Can such a weak, frail worm as I
  But worship and adore.

III.

Father of all, thou dost bestow
On us poor reptiles here below,
  Each good we're taught to prize;
And tho' sometimes we feel thy frown,
The truly grateful heart must own
  Thy judgments just and wise.

IV.

Hail, Gratitude, celestial guest,
Come make thy mansion in my breast,
  Thou spark of love divine;
Inspired by Thee, though troubles rise,
My soul shall mount toward the skies,
  And Heaven itself be mine."

[*Trials of the Human Heart*, vol. III, p. 107.]

The stanzas to Hope, are as touching as they are beautiful:

I.

Oh! cease, vain, busy Fancy, cease
To dwell on scenes long past,
When every hour was winged with peace;
With joy too great to last.
But come, sweet Hope, celestial power,
Thy healing comfort bring;
Oh, soothe my mind, and let me soar
Upon thine airy wing.

II.

When through the vaulted aisle I roam,
And breathe the sigh sincere;
Or o'er my mother's hallowed tomb
Drop the sad, filial tear:
'Tis thou can'st cheer the solemn hour;
Can'st peace and comfort bring;
Elate my thoughts, and bid them soar
Upon thine airy wing:

III.

Methinks I hear thee, whispering say;
"Mortal thy tears give o'er,
Thy mother, thou, in realms of day,
Shalt meet to part no more."
Soothed by thy words, benignant power,
My soul exulting springs,
And toward the sky, with rapture soars
Upon thine airy wings.

[*Trials of the Human Heart*, p. 47.]

In her introduction to the *Trials of the Human Heart*, Mrs. Rowson defends herself and writings against the unjust and gross aspersions of William Cobbett, who had accused her of writing in an improper style in her novel of the *Fille de Chambre;* and of expressing sentiments foreign to her heart—sentiments favorable to America in her comedy of *Slaves of Algiers.* After affirming that "both assertions are equally false and scandalous," she proceeds to give an interesting *resumé* of the events of her early life as a kind of explanation of the political opinions which she entertained.

"Though many a leisure hour," she writes, "has been amused and many a sorrowful one beguiled whilst, giving fancy the reins, I have applied myself to my pen, it has ever been my pride that I never yet wrote a line that might tend to mislead the untutored judgment, or corrupt the inexperienced heart, and heaven forbid that I should suffer aught to escape me that might call a blush to the cheek of innocence or deserve a glance of displeasure from the eye of the most rigid moralist.

"As to my opinion of the political concerns of America, or my wishes in regard to her welfare, I cannot better explain them than by giving a slight sketch of my private history, with which I

rather imagine the creature alluded to, is entirely unacquainted.

"It was my fate, at a period when memory can scarcely retain the smallest trace of the occurrence, to accompany my father, Mr. William Haswell, who is lieutenant in the British navy, to Boston in New England, where he had married a second wife, my mother having lost her life in giving me existence. Blest with a genteel competency, and placed by his rank and education in that sphere of life, where the polite and friendly attention of the most respectable characters courted our acceptance and enjoying a constant intercourse with the families of the officers of the British army and navy, then stationary there, eight years of my life glided almost imperceptibly away.

"At that time the dissensions between England and America increased to an alarming degree. My father bore the king's commission, he had taken the oath of allegiance; certain I am that no one who considers the nature of an oath voluntarily taken, no one who reflects that previous to this period, he had served thirty years under the British government will blame him for a strict adherence to principles which were interwoven as it were into his existence. He did adhere to them, the attend-

ant consequences may readily be supposed; his person was confined, his property confiscated.

"Then it was that the benevolence and philanthropy which so eminently distinguish the sons and daughters of Columbia, made an indelible impression on my heart; an impression which neither time nor chance can obliterate; for while their political principles obliged them to afflict, the humanity, the Christian like benevolence of their souls, incited them to wipe the tears of sorrow from the eyes of my parents, to mitigate their sufferings and render those afflictions in some measure supportable.

"Having been detained as a prisoner two years and a half, part of which was spent in Hingham and part in Abington, an exchange of prisoners taking place between the British and Americans, my father and his family were sent by cartel to Halifax, from whence we embarked for England. I will not attempt to describe the sorrow I experienced, in being thus separated from the companions of my early years; every wish of my heart was for the welfare and prosperity of a country, which contained such dear, such valuable friends, and the only comfort of which my mind was capable was indulging in the delightful hope of being at some future period permitted again to revisit a land so beloved, companions so regretted.

"Too young at that period to have formed any political opinion of my own, I may naturally be supposed to have adopted those of my father; but the truth is, that equally attached to either country, the unhappy dissensions affected me in the same manner as a person may be imagined to feel, who, having a tender lover and an affectionate brother who are equally dear to her heart and by whom she is equally beloved, sees them engaged in a quarrel with, and fighting against, each other, when let whatsoever party conquer, she cannot be supposed to be insensible to the fate of the vanquished.

During a period of twelve years a variety of painful circumstances unnecessary here to recount, contributed to deprive me of a decent independence inherited from my paternal grandfather, and at length to bring me back to America, in a very different situation, I must confess, from that in which I left it; but with a heart still glowing with the same affectionate sensations, and exulting in its evident improvement: the arts are encouraged, manufactures increase, and this happy land bids fair to be in the course of a few years the most flourishing nation in the universe.

"Is it then wonderful, that accustomed from the days of childhood, to think of America and its inhabitants with affection, linked to them by many

near connections and sincerely attached to them from principles of gratitude that I should offer the most ardent prayers for a continuation of their prosperity, or that feeling the benign influence of the blessings of peace and liberty, here so eminently enjoyed, I should wish that influence extended throughout every nation under heaven."

In a paper entitled a *Kick for a Bite*, etc., published in Philadelphia, 1796, Peter Porcupine again rails at Mrs. Rowson's sudden conversion to republicanism and says:

"A liquorish page from *Fille de Chambre* serves me by way of a philtre; the *Inquisitor* is my opium, and I have ever found the *Slaves in Algiers* a most excellent emetic." It does not appear that Mrs. Rowson took any farther notice of her ungenerous fellow countryman. Her life was her reply.

CHAPTER X.

Je vais où le vent me mène,
Sans me plaindre, ou m'effrayer.—*A. V. Arnault.*

Entering into an engagement with J. B. Williamson, manager of the Federal street theatre,[1] Boston, the Rowson family came to this town in 1796, and made their *début* in the comic opera of the *Farmer* by John O'Keefe, Esq., on the night of the 19th of September. In speaking of the performance, the *Centinel* of the 21st instant says: "Mr. Rowson in the song of the *Farmer* united a good voice to a happy execution, and Mrs. Rowson's *Betty Blackberry* received many marks of public pleasure."

By reference to the play bills of that day, it appears that Mrs. Rowson performed the part of Lady Sneerwell in Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, on the 21st of September; and a part in the *Fatal Marriage*, on the 10th of October. She appeared as Margery in the *Spoiled Child*, by Hoare, November

[1] This theatre was opened under the management of Charles S. Powell, February 3, 1794, with the play of *Gustavus Vasa*, by Henry Brooke, Esq. It went into the hands of Colonel J. Tyler for a while and was then leased to J. B. Williamson, who failed in 1797. The building was destroyed by fire, February 2, 1798.—*Snow's History of Boston*, p. 334.

21st; and as Mrs. Druggett, in Mr. Murphy's *Three Weeks after Marriage*, on the 25th of December.

On the evening of January 11, 1797, she personated Catalina, in the comic opera of the *Castle of Andalusia;* on the sixteenth of the same month, Lady Autumn in the *Wedding Day;* on February 1st, Mrs. Cheshire, in the *Agreeable Surprise;* and on February 13, Dame Quickly, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor.* On the 27th of March, she took the part of Mysis, in Kane O'Hara's operetta of *Midas;* and on the 31st, that of Lady Torrendal. On the 3d of April, she appeared as Marcellina, in the *Follies of the Day*, her husband taking the part of Bounce; and on the 12th of the same month, Mr. and Mrs. Rowson enjoyed a benefit, when a new comedy in three acts, entitled *Americans in England, or Lessons for Daughters*, written by the author of *Charlotte Temple*, etc., etc., was for the first time presented. Mr. Rowson appeared as Snap; Mrs. Rowson as Mrs. Ormsby and Jemima Winthrop, and Miss Charlotte Rowson,[1] as Betty: Mrs. Row-

[1] Charlotte Rowson was born in or near London, about 1779; was early left an orphan, and came to this country in Wignell's company, with her brother. She was for a while upon the stage, and played in light characters, and sang with fine effect, such songs as Auld Robin Gray, etc., which were then popular. She married before she was eighteen years old, Mr. William P. Johnston, then a bookkeeper in the office of David Claypole, of Philadelphia, and

son pronounced the epilogue. This play was again performed on the 19th of April, and also for the benefit of the author, on the 26th, when it was received with great applause by the audience. The *Chronicle* speaks enthusiastically of the fine acting of Mrs. Rowson. This play is now extremely rare; the book hunters having offered as much as fifty dollars for a single copy. On the 3d of May, Mrs. Rowson's play of the *Slaves in Algiers* was performed; and on the 17th of this month her season in Boston closed with the popular play of the *Spoiled Child*, in which, as Mrs. Pickle, she made without the least regret, her final exit from the stage. "As an actress," says the *Boston Gazette* [1824], "she was distinguished for correct deportment, clearness of enunciation, and good reading." She entered on the profession, not from inclination,

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publisher of the first daily paper issued in this country. Their son, David Claypole Johnston, born in March, 1797, married Miss Sarah Murphy, of Boston, in 1830, by whom he had eight children. He was eminent as an artist and caricaturist, and died November 8, 1865. His son, Thomas Murphy Johnston, has inherited his father's genius. Of the daughters, Miss Susan R. Johnston, in connection with Miss Mills, continued Mrs. Rowson's school; another married Mr. John T. Tait, of Philadelphia. Mrs. Wm. P. [Rowson] Johnston died in July, 1855, at the age of seventy-six years. She was of medium size; and her eyes and hair were dark, and her temper genial. She was very much attached to Mrs. Rowson, and regarded her more as a mother than a sister.—See *Genealogical Register*, April, 1866, p. 170.

but necessity; and though she met with a fair measure of success in it, the failure of Mr. Williamson, together with the silent monitor within her breast, persuaded her to relinquish it, and seek for an employment more congenial with her feelings, and more beneficial to society.

CHAPTER XI.

Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot;
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.
Thompson's Spring, p. 53.

On leaving the stage in the spring of 1797, Mrs. Rowson, under the patronage of Mrs. Samuel Smith, began a school in Federal street, and with but a single pupil, Mrs. Smith's adopted daughter, continued it for one whole term. She was known in Boston only as a novel writer, as an actress — how could children be confided to her care?

But the light cannot be hid; her motto was *tant que je puis*, and persevering steadily, she came before the close of the scholastic year to number one hundred pupils on her daily roll; and applications were received for more than she could possibly accommodate. Her head, and heart and hand were given to her school; and yet redeeming rigidly her time, she suffered not the ink to dry upon her graceful pen. In 1798, the birthday of Washington, who was then expected to assume again the command of our armies, was celebrated with great *éclat* throughout the country. The patriotic address

before the troops at Baltimore had given Mrs. Rowson some renown as a poet, and she was invited to prepare a song for the great festival in Boston. She wrote the following, to the tune of Anacreon in Heaven, since called the Star Spangled Banner, which was sung and rapturously applauded by the audience:

I.

When rising from ocean Columbia appeared,
Minerva to Jove, humbly kneeling, requested
That she, as its patroness, might be revered,
And the power to protect it in her be invested.
Jove nodded assent, pleasure glowed in her breast
As rising, the goddess her will thus expressed:
The sons of Columbia forever shall be
From oppression secure, and from anarchy free.

II.

Rapture flashed through the spheres as the mandate went forth
When Mars and Apollo together uniting,
Cried, "Sister, thy sons shall be famed for their work
Their wisdom in peace and their valor in fighting;
Besides from among them a CHIEF shall arise
As a soldier or statesman, undaunted and wise,
Who would shed his best blood, that Columbia might be
From oppression secure, and from anarchy free."

III.

Jove, pleased with the prospect, majestic arose
And said: "By ourself they shall not be neglected;
But ever secure, though surrounded by foes,
By *Washington* bravely upheld and protected,

And while peace and plenty preside o'er the plains,
While memory exists or while gratitude reigns,
His name ever loved and remembered shall be,
While Columbians remain *Independent* and *Free.*" [1]

At this time *Reuben and Rachel, or Tales of Old Times*, was passing through the press. It is in two volumes, 12mo, and was written with the design of awakening a deeper interest in the study of history which the author had pursued with great delight, and of showing that not only evil itself, but the very appearance of evil is to be avoided.

While this story presents many passages of vivid description; and several scenes of touching pathos, we nevertheless can claim but little merit for it as a work of art. The writer made her plot subservient to her desire of teaching history, and hence it ranges over a period of quite two centuries. The hero and heroine, Reuben and Rachel Dudley, whose grandfather, William Dudley, had been taken captive by the Indians in King Philip's war, and had married Oberea, the daughter of a chieftain, are not introduced to the attention of the reader until the chapter closing the first volume. Through many trying scenes and temptations both in England and America, they are then conducted, still

[1] *Miscellaneous Poems*, p. 178.

maintaining the honor of the name of Dudley, until they finally come to settle in peace on the estate of their beloved father at Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania. Mrs. Rowson has breathed so much of her own generous emotion into this work, that in spite of its want of unity and the improbable incidents with which its pages abound, the interest of the reader is enchained as by the spell of an enchanter, to the last.[1]

The following extract in which the twin children make inquiries of their Aunt Rachel respecting a coronet of feathers which they had accidentally found, displays alike the author's graceful style and happy manner of imparting knowledge to the young.

"'It was my brother's,' said she in a mournful tone, taking it from the child's head and laying it on her knee; 'I have seen him wear it often.'

"'He was a great man in America, aunt?' said Reuben.

"'He was more than great, my love, he was good.'

"'Pray, aunt,' said Rachel, 'do you remember my grandmother?'

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[1] "She wrote a novel called *Reuben and Rachel*, which I remember to have read and admired when I was an apprentice."—*Personal Memoirs by Joseph T. Buckingham*, vol. I, p. 84.

This work is now quite rare. A copy of it, however, is preserved in the Library of the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass. Another copy lies before me.

"'Perfectly.'

"'Was she an Indian?'

"'Yes.'

"'What, quite a wild savage?'

"'No, my dear; she was what is in general erroneously termed so; but her heart was as gentle, as compassionate, as full of virtue and piety as that of the most enlightened Christian.'

"'Was she black, aunt?'

"'No, dark brown, or rather copper. But the complexion of her face was like that of her mind. Its charms and imperfections were discoverable at one glance, and it was ever beautiful because invariable.'

"'But was my grandfather a sachem?'

"'He was.'

"'What is a sachem?'

"'It is a title given to a chief amongst the Indians, and is the same as a governor with us.'

"'How came he to be a chief of the savages, aunt?'

"'I will tell you,' replied Aunt Rachel.

"It was a subject on which she delighted to expatiate. She stirred up the fire, folded up her work, and placing the attentive children on each side of her began. But my readers already know the whole story and repetitions are ever tedious. Aunt Rachel was minute in her recital. At the

account of her capture Rachel wept; but Reuben started from his seat, his countenance glowing with resentment, and cried, 'I wish I had been there.'

"'And what would you have done, my love,' said his aunt.

"'Have rescued you or died,' replied our hero.

"'Charming, undaunted spirit,' exclaimed his aunt, and then continued her narrative.

"When she recounted the death of Otooganoo, and the solemn manner in which he recommended their father, (then an infant) to the care of the chiefs: 'Good old man,' said Rachel in the most expressive accents of affection, 'what pity he should die.'

"'Then my father is a sachem,' and the seeds of ambition which nature had implanted, but which till that moment had lain dormant in his bosom, started into life. At the account of their grandfather's death, the children both sobbed audibly.

"'I will, I am determined, I will go to America,' said Reuben, first suppressing his emotions.

"'What, without me, brother,' asked Rachel in a mournful voice.

"'No, no!' he replied; 'not without you, but when I am a man we will go together; we will find out our grandfather's government and discover ourselves to his people; I dare say they would be glad to see us since they loved him so well.'

"'But what should we go there for, brother? I am sure we are very happy here; and papa would not be willing to part with us.'

"'Well, then I will go and leave you with them, and when I have settled myself in my government, I will send for you all; oh what a fine house I will have, and then what a number of servants, and horses and coaches.'

"Aunt Rachel smiled to hear how eagerly the fancy of youth catches at the hope of future greatness, and how readily they connect the ideas of grandeur, affluence and numerous attendants, to the possession of a title. She gazed for a moment with pleasure on his intelligent countenance which the emotions of his little swelling heart had lighted up with uncommon animation, and paused, unwilling to throw a dampness on those delightful sensations he appeared to enjoy. At length,

"'What would you say,' cried she, 'if I were to tell you that your grandfather had no attendants except a few warriors, who, from voluntary attachment to his person, followed to protect him from danger; that he had neither horse nor carriage; that his palace was composed chiefly of the bark of trees; that his bed was the skins of wild beasts, and his seat of state the trunk of an old tree hewn into something resembling a chair, covered with beaver

and other skins, and its ornaments the teeth of tigers, polished shells and fish bones?'

"'But he was good,' said Rachel, 'and consequently happy.'

"'And he was brave and wise,' said Reuben exultingly, 'and every body loved him.'

"'Sweet children,' said Aunt Rachel, 'those are consequences which ought ever to follow goodness, bravery and wisdom. But, alas! they are not always certain.'

"'What, then, are not all good persons happy?'

"'Not always in their outward circumstances; but they enjoy internal peace.'

"'And are not the brave and the wise always esteemed?'

"'By those who have sense and discernment, they in general are; but unfortunately, great and shining qualifications, either of mind or person, excite, in general, more envy than love.'

"'What is envy, aunt?'

"'A passion, my dear Rachel, to which I hope you will ever remain a stranger.' With this wish the good old lady kissed the children and dismissed them to bed."[1]

[1] *Reuben and Rachel*, vol. II, p. 176.

CHAPTER XI.

Apt to teach.—ST. PAUL.

In the spring of 1799,[1] Mrs. Rowson introduced a piano-forte into her school room, an event which constitutes an era in the progress of music in Boston, where the instrument was then almost entirely unknown. Mr. Laumont was employed as the teacher, and young ladies from different parts of the country now began to avail themselves of this opportunity of learning to play upon the instrument which had recently come to take the place of the spinet and the harpsichord. The elegant manners, lively imagination, fine conversational powers, and affectionate disposition of Mrs. Rowson won the hearts of her pupils; gave her gradual access to the most refined and intelligent families of the town, and steadily increased the reputation of her school. In the autumn of this year she wrote a spirited ode on the birthday of John Adams, then president of the United States, which was received

[1] In 1767, a piano was introduced on the stage at Covent Garden theatre, London, as a new instrument.— See *New American Encyclopædia*, article piano.

with favor by both of the political parties, and secured the good will of a large and influential family circle.

At the commencement of the new century, however, she gave the public a poetic composition still more beautiful, entitled *An Eulogy to the Memory of George Washington, Esq.*, in which these impressive and admonitory lines occur:

> Let this reflection dry a nation's tears:
> He died as ripe in glory as in years;
> And though the loss of Washington is great,
> Adams remains to guide the helm of state;
> And would you prove the hero's memory dear?
> Learn his last parting precepts to revere:
> "My friends, my fellow citizens," said he,
> "Be still unanimous, be great and free;
> For know, a state may soon be rendered weak
> By foreign faction, or by private pique,
> Let not corruption e'er your judgment blind;
> Preserve with care an independent mind;
> Support, revere the laws; believe me, friends,
> Your all on unanimity depends:
> By faction, all would be to chaos hurled,
> Be but united and defy the world." [1]

Mrs. Rowson was intended for a teacher. Loving ardently the pursuit of literature, she had the rare

[1] Dr. Josiah Bartlett quoted these lines in his oration on the death of Washington.

and happy faculty, without which no instructor can succeed, of inspiring others with her own emotions. Her own enthusiasm awoke enthusiasm. She was moreover, systematic, dignified, persistent. Her school became the topic of conversation in the fashionable circles, and applications for admission to it were made from every section of the country.

Finding her accommodations too limited, and desirous of enjoying the freshness and beauty of the country, Mrs. Rowson took a lease in the spring of 1800, of the beautiful mansion, since known as the Bigelow place,[1] about five miles from the capital, in the fine old town of Medford, and to this charming spot transferred her school. The house, near that of Gov. John Brooks, is delightfully situated on the left or eastern bank of the Mystic river which winds along through meadows of the deepest green to meet the sea. Built on the acclivity rising gradually from the margin of the stream, and commanding a charming view

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[1] The Hon. Timothy Bigelow, from whom this place derives its name, removed to Medford in 1807, and died May 18, 1821, at the age of fifty-four years. One of his daughters became the wife of Abbott Lawrence. The house was built by Mr. Joseph Wyman, of Woburn, who taught a school in it several years anterior to its occupation by Mrs. Rowson. Mrs. Newton, a sister of Gilbert Stuart, the painter, succeeded Mrs. Rowson.—*Brooks's History of Medford*, p. 292.

of the distant spires of Boston and of Cambridge, it seems intended as the appropriate residence of the Muses and the Graces. The approach to it from the road which here runs through a very beautiful grove, is by a long avenue of lofty trees, whose branches interlacing, form a grateful shade. The ash, the elm, the pine, the linden, and the silver tree, display their rich and varied foliage; the clambering vines and wild flowers shed their fragrance on the evening air, and the song birds, unmolested, sing their sweetest melodies. Wandering at nightfall underneath the leafy arches of this secluded wood, through which the silver moonbeams glimmer, and listening to the murmuring of the waters and the whippoorwill's plaintive note, one could easily imagine himself in the sacred grove of *Academia vetus*, dedicated to the study of divine philosophy.

To this sylvan retreat, Mrs. Rowson drew pupils not only from this, but other states and even from the British provinces. Here she taught them those useful, varied and elegant accomplishments for which the ladies of the ancient *régime* were so happily distinguished; here she discussed the politics of the country with the eccentric Dr. David Osgood and the courtly Col. John Brooks; here she wrote her pathetic story, *Sarah*, in which her

own heart's struggles are most touchingly portrayed; here she composed the *Choice*, in which her *beau ideal* of terrestrial happiness is unfolded; and here beneath the arching vines, and surrounded by her loving pupils in the summer evenings she would vividly recount some story of the olden times, or sing to the guitar, which she had learned to touch quite skillfully, a song of her own writing, or lead them forth into the mazes of a merry contra dance.

By referring to the papers of that period I find that her charges were thirty dollars per month, for board; five dollars entrance each for music and dancing, and then seventy-five cents per lesson for one and eight dollars per quarter for the other. Mr. Peter Von Hagen[1] and then afterwards Mr. G. Graupner,[2] was her music teacher; Mr. Miln taught the French language and Miss Peggy Swan of Medford, penmanship. The dancing master was

[1] Mr. Peter A. Von Hagen, professor of music, died in Boston, October, 1803, aged 48 years. "A worthy and honest citizen." See *Boston Weekly Magazine*, Oct. 22, 1803.

[2] Mr. Gotlieb Graupner was born in Hanover, Germany, and was an oboe player in the royal band. He came to this country at the close of the last century and settled in Boston, where he was successfully engaged for many years in publishing, selling and teaching music. His house and store was No. 6 Franklin street. He was the first American importer of Clementi's pianos. He married for his first wife Mrs. Catharine [Comoford] Hilliar by whom he had issue: 1. Olivia. 2. Catharine C. 3. Charles Wil-

Monsieur Des Forge, a French nobleman, whose daughter, Bernardin Des Forge was a boarder in Mrs. Rowson's family.

In discipline this celebrated teacher was severe, and yet not arbitrary; *fortiter in re, suaviter in modo* was her constant rule of action.

"A bell," says one of her Medford pupils, "was rung at five o'clock in the morning; we then arose and learned a lesson before breakfast. At seven o'clock the bell was rung again for prayers and when we had assembled, Mrs. Rowson, holding her English prayer book walked into the room with stately tread, and while the young ladies and assistants stood around her in a circle, read the morning family prayer; we then sat down to breakfast, Mrs. Rowson presiding at the head of one table, Mrs. Haswell, or an assistant occupying the corresponding seat at the head of the other. At

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liam. 4. Samuel. 5. John Henry. M. (1), Margaret Beath. (2) Hester Thomson. 6. Frederick Lewis. 7. Charlotte E.; and for his second wife, Miss Mary, daughter of Capt. John Hills, by whom he had: 8. Harriet Hills. 9. Stephen Hills. 10. Charles Edward. Mr. Gotlieb Graupner died April 16, 1836, aged 69 years, and was entombed in the family vault under St. Matthew's church, South Boston. His daughter, Harriet Hills, is a teacher of the piano, and his son John Henry an engraver of music, Boston.

The Graupner and Rowson families were always on intimate terms with each other. They occupied the same pew in Dr. John S. J. Gardiner's church.

dinner Mrs. Rowson offered thanks. We were never allowed to go unattended beyond the limits of the grove and garden, or to pluck a flower or fruit without permission of our teachers. Our lessons were reading, writing, geography, drawing, painting, and embroidery. Our preceptress. was very attentive to our dress and manners. If she noticed any of us sitting, or standing in a stooping posture, she would immediately pronounce the name of the forgetful one and assume herself the proper atitude.

"At nine o'clock in the evening Mrs. Rowson, arrayed in a dark striped, or black silk, and sometimes in a white muslin dress, entered the school room and read a prayer with a clear and impressive voice, and then receiving a parting kiss from her dear pupils, bade them an affectionate good night.

"Though exact in her requirements as to neatness, order, punctuality, *bienséance*, and correct expression, she frequently indulged with us in little pleasantries, *bon mots*, and anecdotes which twined as flowers around the iron bands of discipline, and won without much hazard of respect the pupil's heart."

"I once remarked to her," said a person who had the good fortune to attend her school, "that one of the young ladies had a most luxuriant head of curling hair." "Ah!" said Mrs. Rowson, "that

is not her own hair, but a wig, and thereby hangs a tale;" alluding to a fever which had caused the lady's hair to fall.

At another time a pupil asked her how the name of *Madame de Genlis* ought to be pronounced. After kindly telling her, Mrs. Rowson added: I once sent a servant to a bookstore for Madame de Genlis's works. He returned and said the bookseller knew nothing of them. "What did you ask for?" said I. "Why, I told him you wanted the history of *Mad John Lee!*"

On Saturday at noon, Mrs. Rowson was accustomed to present each scholar with a piece of paper on which was written her standing or deportment for the week, and which was called "the character." The reception of these brief, but very expressive words of praise or blame created generally a profound sensation in the seminary, and often caused the tear of joy or sorrow to flow forth. "What have you got?" "Let me see yours!" "I told you that you would be sorry for it!" "Oh! yours is always good!"—and similar expressions flew from lip to lip on the retirement of the teacher from the presentation, and fresh resolves were made to make a better record on the coming week. Some of these celebrated *characters* on yellow paper and

in faded ink are lying before me as I write, and as I read in Mrs. Rowson's neat and well known hand the significant words: "Incorrigible," "Inattentive," "Uniformly good," "Very neat, industrious and well behaved," "Excellent in manners," I seem to see the dark eyes of the gifted teacher fixed upon the beaming faces of the lovely group around her; to hear her words of sweet encouragement; and responses from that shining circle touching millions yet to come: "Yes, beloved teacher, we will obey thy precepts and aspire to meet the duties which humanity and heaven impose!" One of these papers bears the following pleasant turn upon the word *character*, which the school applied to them: "It is unnecessary, my dear young lady, to give *you* a *character;* but I hope always to know you in the *character* of my friend. Susanna Rowson."

To this the recipient has most affectionately added: "Dear, generous, kind hearted woman! How often since that time have I wished, but in vain, that she could know the sorrow I have felt for any want of respect and gratitude I may have shown towards her and to ask her forgiveness. God grant that we may meet in heaven!"[1]

The following testimonials exhibit the heartiness,

[1] Mrs. Samuel Batchelder, of Cambridge, Mass., died 1869.

as well as the elegant style in which this earnest teacher was accustomed to recommend her meritorious pupils.

MR. DOGGETT,[1] MEDFORD, *April* 28, 1801.

Sir: I am extremely happy in giving my testimony to the merits of Miss Sallie Burgess, who has been under my immediate care eight months. She is a young lady of good abilities, amiable disposition, and unexceptionable manners. She has made, whilst with me, great proficiency with her needle and pencils, and I believe her qualifications in general to be such as will render her a very desirable acquisition to any respectable academy.

I am, Sir,
With respect,
Your humble servant,
SUSA. ROWSON.

MEDFORD, *April* 28, 1803.

Respected Sir: I have the pleasure of recommending to your friendly attention, Miss Mary Warner, a young lady whose personal merit, and acquired knowledge are such, as make me proud to acknowledge her having been my pupil for nearly a year and a half.

In the department for which she is engaged for the Academy at Taunton, I have no doubt of her acquitting herself with honor, and so as to obtain the entire approbation of her employers. There is nothing which seems likely to impede her immediate success but her extreme diffidence, and that is a defect (if so it may be named), which time

[1] This was the Rev. Simeon Doggett, preceptor of the academy Taunton, Mass. He died March 20, 1852, aged 87 years.

and experience will naturally rectify. Her disposition and manners are so amiable, that I feel much interested in her success and happiness. That she may ably fill the situation to which she is called, and her future good fortune in life be equal to her deserts is my fervent wish.

I am, Sir,
With respect,
Your humble servant,
SA. ROWSON.

Mr. Doggett.

On the sabbath, Mrs. Rowson was accustomed to lead her school in procession to the meeting-house, where seats in the galleries had been provided by a vote of the town,[1] and where the young ladies listened for the most part with devout attention to the eloquent discourses of one of the ablest divines of his day. Some little occurrence, however, would occasionally create a new sensation, and furnish a topic of conversation for the week. On one sabbath morning after the young ladies had taken their accustomed places in the gallery, and the good doctor given out his hymn, it was suddenly discovered that the choir, amounting to some forty or fifty, had left *en masse*, their accustomed seats, and that no one

[1] "Medford, May 12, 1800. Voted that the second and third seats in the women's gallery in the meeting house be allowed Mrs. Rowson for herself and scholars, and that she be allowed to put doors and locks on them."—*History of Medford*, Mass., by the Rev. Charles Brooks, p. 292.

appeared to sing a note. In this exigence, Mr. Rowson, with Gen. John Montgomery, of Haverhill, N. H., who was then on a visit to the school, rose in his pew below, gave out the tune, and the heavy base of the one, uniting with the fine tenor of the other, formed a powerful duo which surprised and delighted the listening congregation. At the close of the service, Dr. Osgood tendered them his cordial thanks, and at dinner invited them to do the singing for him in the afternoon; but when the service opened, every member of the choir, both male and female, was in his or her own place.

At the examination of Mrs. Rowson's academy, which was held in Franklin Hall, Boston, October 14, 1802,[1] a large and fashionable audience was present, when original dialogues, written in poetry by the preceptress, were spoken by the young ladies, all of whom were dressed in white; and elegant specimens of embroidery on satin, and painting in water colors, were exhibited. I will

[1] The *Boston Weekly Magazine* gives this account of it: "The public were gratified by an exhibition of the drawing, needlework and other improvements of the young ladies of Mrs. Rowson's academy in Medford. The pupils assembled in Franklin Hall, Nassau, [since Common street], which was decorated with a number of very beautiful specimens of embroidery, paintings and drawings in water colors, maps, etc. The ladies were attired with the greatest simplicity — no ornament whatever appearing among them — all pure white, and fit emblem of their own excellence."

venture to present my readers one of the many pieces which were recited at this, or at a subsequent examination of this celebrated school.[1]

The Bee, A Fable, by Mrs. Rowson.

[Spoken by her little niece, Mary Haswell.]

Ladies and gentlemen, will you allow
A very small girl, who scarcely knows how
To make her courtesy in a proper way,
To tell a story which she heard one day?
It chanced once on a time, no matter when,
For all strange things they tell us happened then,
A little bee on a sunshiny day
Crept from the hive among the flowers to play.
A wise old laborer of the hive espied
His sportive gambols and thus gravely cried:
"To work as well as play should be your pride,
Come learn of me, for wisdom is a treasure,
And you shall mingle profit with your pleasure.
Observe this bed of clustering flowers; behold
Their velvet leaves all powdered o'er with gold,
And see within the cups of crimson hue
The precious drops of rich, nectareous dew.

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[1] A beautiful poem on the *Rights of Woman*, by Mrs. Rowson, commencing

> While patriots on wide philosophic plan,
> Declaim upon the wondrous rights of man, etc.,

was spoken by Miss Mary Warner; and Miss C. Hutchins read a fine prose composition which was published in the *Boston Weekly Magazine*.

This golden dust, this precious dew collect,
Now in the early morning, nor neglect
To bear it to the hive, a valued store,
Against the time when chilling torrents roar,
And Boreas howls, and rains and snows descend,
And bees must on their hoarded stores depend."
Now this young bee was a good little creature,
Had much good sense, industry and good nature;
She sipped the dew, scraped off the golden dust,
That turned to liquid sweets, and in a crust
Composed of this, the ambrosial treasure closed,
But as she worked, a drone who had reposed
For many a morning in a lily's bell,
Addressed her thus: "Poor thing: 'tis mighty well
That you have strength and spirits thus to labor,
You are indeed a valuable neighbor
To toil on thus from morn till eve for others;
For, trust me, little slave, I and my brothers,
When we have spent the summer sweetly here,
All winter will regale on your good cheer.
For I'm too delicate, too blythe, too gay,
To waste in toil my summer hours away,
I was not formed for labor, I was made
To rest on thyme beds in the myrtle shade:
I do protest, were I obliged to bear
That yellow dust away, and take such care,
That not a grain is lost, that I should die,
Fainting beneath the fever of the sky.
But you were formed for toil and care by nature,
And are a mighty good, industrious creature."
"Winter draws nigh," replies the little bee,
"And who is wisest we shall quickly see,
My friend who warned me to beware in season,
Or yours who left you in despite of reason

To bathe in dew, flit over beds of flowers
Heedless of coming cold, or wintry showers."
When winter came, the little bee was well,
Secure and warm within her waxen cell;
The drones half starved came shivering to the door
And forced an entrance, they could do no more:
The laborers rose, the encroaching tribe drove forth
To brave the terrors of the frigid north,
Shrink in the rigor of the wintry sky,
Lament their idleness; to starve and die;
While the good little bee next coming May
Hailed the returning sun, alert and gay,
Led forth an infant swarm in healthful ease;
A bright example unto future bees.
My story's ended; but methinks you say,
Is there no moral, little girl, I pray?
Yes, there's a moral; hear it if you please;
This is the hive, and we're the little bees,
Our governess is the adviser sage
Who fits us for the world's delusive stage,
By pointing out the weeds among the flowers,
By teaching us to use our mental powers;
To shun the former, and with nicest care
Cull from the latter all that's sweet and fair,
Extract their honey, keep their color bright
To deck the chaplet for a winter's night.
Have we succeeded? Judge, you will not wrong us:
I trust we have no idle drones among us:
Or is there one or two, how great their shame,
Whilst here we're striving for the meed of fame,
And catch with transports of exulting joy,
The approbating glance from every eye;
To feel they cannot hope to share our pleasure,
To know they slighted wisdom's offered treasure,

To feel that those kind friends who dearest love them,
Will blush and pity, while they can't approve them.
O dear, I would not for the richest gem
That India can produce, feel just like them,
Nor lose the joy we hope to feel this day,
To hear our friends and patronesses say,
"All is done right and well, and truly these
Dear children are a hive of thriving bees."
And should you thus approve, you'll make of me
A very proud and happy little bee.[1]

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[1] From *A Present for Young Ladies, containing Poems, Dialogues, Addresses, etc., as recited by the Pupils of Mrs. Rowson's Academy at the Annual Exhibitions.* By Susanna Rowson. Boston: published by John West & Co., No. 75 Cornhill. 1811. E. G. House, Printer. This little work of 156 pages, 18mo, is now quite rare.

CHAPTER XII.

"The standard of society may be gracefully, and almost imperceptibly raised by exciting the attention to questions of taste, morals, ingenuity and literature."— HANNAH MORE'S HINTS, p. 207.

On the 30th of October, 1802, the *Boston Weekly Magazine*, a periodical in quarto form devoted to polite literature, and published by Samuel Gilbert and Thomas Dean, made its appearance. Mrs. Rowson was engaged as editor, and Mrs. John Murray, author of the *Gleaner*, *Friend*, etc., as one of the principal contributors. The paper was continued three years[1] when it was superseded by the more able *Monthly Anthology*, edited by Mr. William Tudor. As an early attempt to describe the manners, reprehend the follies, cultivate the taste and soften the customs of the people, the *Boston Weekly Magazine* is not discreditable to American literature. In looking over its pleasant and diversified pages I find among other poetical communi-

[1] This early American journal of polite literature was discontinued Oct. 19, 1805. Its volumes are now extremely rare. The only complete set known to the writer is in the Boston Athenæum. In the last number but one, Mrs. Rowson inserted some very beautiful lines on the death of a beloved pupil, Mrs. Lydia Parsons, aged 21 years, commencing:

Wealth and youth and beauty joined
Cannot sinking nature save,
Lovely form, or lovelier mind,
Shield the owner from the grave.

cations over the signature of S. R. this fine little address to a CANARY BIRD, which was found dead in its cage two days after the departure of its mistress from home:

I.

His mistress gone, poor little Bill,
His wings in pensive sadness hung;
His soft, melodious voice was still,
Unless these mournful notes he sung.

II.

"Ah, mistress mine, where art thou gone?
Return, return," he plaintive cried;
Thus many an hour he made his moan
Till sick of hope deferred, he died.

III.

Poor bird, with thee I sympathize;
Such pangs the feeling bosom proves,
That wrung with anguish hourly dies
When absent from the friend it loves.[1]

Another pleasant little poem appears in the number for April 3, 1803, entitled:

HOME.

I.

While round the globe the wanderer
With wearied steps may roam;
Through every stage, in every clime
Each thought still points to home.

[1] *Boston Weekly Magazine, Nov.*, 1802.

II.

Each dear domestic scene is still,
By partial fancy drest,
And e'en the Greenland savage thinks
His barren soil the best.

III.

So wheresoe'er henceforth by fate,
This frame of mine may be,
Each thought, each wish will fondly dwell,
America, with thee.

The following spirited ode appears in No. 5, 1802:

THANKSGIVING.

I.

Autumn receding throws aside
Her robe of many a varied dye;
And winter in majestic pride,
Advances in the lowering sky;
The laborer in his granary stores
The golden sheaves all safe from spoil;
While from her horn gay Plenty pours
Her treasures to reward his toil.
To solemn temples let us now repair,
And bow in grateful adoration there;
Bid the full strain in hallelujahs rise.
To waft the sacred incense to the skies.

II.

Now the hospitable board,
Groans beneath the rich repast;
All that luxury can afford,
Grateful to the eye or taste.

While the orchard's sparkling juice,
  And the vintage join their powers,
All that nature can produce,
  Bounteous Heaven bids be ours.
Let us give thanks; yes, yes, be sure,
Send for the widow and the orphan poor;
Give them wherewith to purchase clothes and food,
'Tis the best way to prove our gratitude.

III.

On the hearth high flames the fire,
  Sparkling tapers lend their light;
Wit and genius now aspire
  On Fancy's gay and rapid flight;
Now the viol's sprightly lay,
  As the moments light advance,
Bids us revel, sport and play,
  Raise the song, or lead the dance.
Come, sportive love and sacred friendship, come,
Help us to celebrate our harvest-home;
In vain the year its annual tribute pours,
Unless you grace the scene and lead the laughing hours.

S. R.

Mrs. Rowson contributed to this magazine a series of light and graceful papers, after the manner of the *Spectator*, on education, music, books, etc., called the Gossip, and running up to sixty or seventy numbers. In one of these papers, Gossip, No. 13, the subject of which is Novel Reading, the writer says: "Of the works of Mrs. Rowson, *Reuben and*

Rachel, an historical romance, is the best. *Charlotte* and the *Inquisitor* have considerable degree of merit." This appears quite modest in comparison with the "mercenary puffing" of the present day, and it is, indeed, probable that some of the numbers of the Gossip were from another pen.

But the most important contribution of Mrs. Rowson to this magazine was a serial story called *Sincerity*, in thirty-three numbers, the last of which appears in the issue of June the 20th, 1804. The whole was published by Charles Williams in a small volume in 1813, under the title of *Sarah, the Exemplary Wife.*[1] The scene of this novel is laid in London, and the time extends from 1775 until 1793. The story opens where such productions generally terminate, with the wedding day, the first line of it being, "Yes, Anne, the die is cast, I am a wife." The motto is: "Do not marry a fool," etc., which those acquainted with the author's life perceive had sharp significance. In the sufferings and unflinching fidelity of the heroine, Sarah Darnley, the author

[1] *Sarah, the Exemplary Wife.* By Susanna Rowson, author of *Charlotte Temple, Reuben and Rachel, Fille de Chambre*, etc. etc. "Do not marry a fool: he is continually doing absurd and disgraceful things, for no other reason but to show he dares do them."—*Gregory's Legacy.* Remember that nothing but strict truth can carry you through life with honor and credit. Boston: Published by Charles Williams; Watson & Bangs, Printers, 1813.

is said to have given with a very faithful pen, the portraiture of her own checkered and eventful life; and one of her intimate acquaintances once said to me, "This is her best biography." The remark must be understood, however, as referring, not so much to the outward scenes and circumstances, though some of these the author but too well remembered, as to the sufferings and discipline of the heart. The plan of the story is simple; the leading characters are few, distinct and consistent with themselves in word and action; the style is easy, flowing, natural, and sometimes truly tender and pathetic. The volume closes with this exalted sentiment, which came directly from the writer's own generous and chastened soul: "It is the sincere and pious spirit alone, that tried in the thrice heated furnace of affliction, comes out like refined gold, bright and pure and fit to be placed in the palace of the Most High." — *Sarah*, p. 270.

In the summer of 1803, Mrs. Rowson removed her school from Medford to the large and commodious mansion of the celebrated Gen. William Hull[1] of Newton, and held her first public examination in

[1] Gen. William Hull, born in Derby, Conn., June 24, 1753; Yale College, 1772; and died November 29, 1825; was a warm personal friend of Mrs. Rowson, and a patron of her school. Although actually condemned to death for his supposed pusillanimity in the affair at Detroit, it seems now to be the prevailing opinion that his

Harrington Hall, Watertown, in October following. The papers spoke of it in glowing terms of commendation. Her seminary continued to rise in popular favor; distinguished families in every part of the country bestowed on it their patronage; and it was not misplaced; for her large experience, fertile fancy, love of order, aptitude to teach and great executive ability, rendered it one of the very best institutions of the kind upon this continent.

In order to make a deep impression on the mind, she had inscribed in imposing capitals along the walls of her school room, mottoes such as these: "What has been done may be done." "Speak the truth always." "Perseverance leads to excellence." She caused her pupils to write with pencil letters to their parents and she then with anxious care corrected them; she insisted not only on polite behavior, but also on the use of elegant forms of speech and a distinct articulation; she taught her pupils the art, and impressed upon them the importance of preserving health; she diverted them by a frequent change of study; she encouraged them by judicious commendation; and loving litera-

course at the time was worthy of praise instead of condemnation. He married Sarah Fuller, and had Sarah, born 1783; Eliza, born 1784, married Isaac McClellan; Abraham Fuller, born 1786; Nancy Binney, born 1787; Maria, born 1788; Rebecca Parker, born 1790; and Caroline, born 1793. See *Ward's History of Newton*, p. 312.

ture most ardently herself, she by the secret law of sympathy awakened in their minds a kindred taste for it. Her pupils can never forget the ardor, life and love she manifested in her instructions at this period; the brilliancy of her conversation; the splendor of her examinations, or the gentleness of her heart.[1] The second public exhibition of the

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[1] One of her old term bills, neatly made out in her own beautiful chirography, and now lying before me, is not devoid of interest as indicative of some of the studies of her pupils, and of the cost of female education at that period :

NEWTON, *May* 26, 1805.

JOHN MONTGOMERY, ESQ.,

To S. ROWSON, Dr.

To 23 weeks board for his daughter, Miss Ann Montgomery,	$57 00
" Do Tuition,	16 50
" Use of books, pens and ink,	75
" Silk for finishing embroidery,	1 00
" Altering, printing and painting, do	1 50
" Use of embroidery frame,	25
" 4 writing books,	80
" Drawing paper, pencils, etc.,	1 50
" Washing 13 pieces,	54
" 1 Grammar,	20
" Carriage to meeting,	1 50
	$81 54
" Entrance and one quarter's dancing,	9 00
To 15 weeks board of Miss Mary Montgomery,	37 50
" Do Tuition,	11 25
" Use of books, pens and ink,	66
" Use of piano-forte,	2 20
" 2 writing books,	40
" Drawing paper, pencils, etc.,	85
" Satin, silk, etc., for a screen,	5 00
" Use of embroidery frame,	25
" Small piece for pin cushion,	50
" Ticket to the play and carriage for both ladies,	4 66
" Washing, 13 pieces,	54
	$63 81
Deduct for one week's absence of Miss Ann,	3 25

Miss Ann,	$90 34	Cash recd. of J. M. Esq.,	50 00
Miss Mary,	63 81		
	154 45		$53 25
	53 23	Paid,	
		SUSAN ROWSON.	

Balance due S. R. $101 22

16

school in Newton occurred, October 17, 1804, and engaged the attention of the public quite as much as the commencement at the college in the neighboring town of Cambridge.

Mrs. Rowson had a thorough knowledge of the Word of God; she took it as her guide, and made it the basis of her educational system. She interpreted it with singular ability, and her scriptural readings at this epoch in her life became quite celebrated. The Rev. Dr. Jonathan Homer[1] and the leading families in the vicinity used to go into the school room and with rapt attention sit and hear this popular teacher read and eloquently expound the sacred page to her beloved pupils.

Mrs. Rowson's diversion was her pen. To this she betook herself when her pupils had retired to rest, and lovingly portrayed the shifting scenes of busy fancy, or the joys and sorrows of her own generous heart. With little regard for praise or blame, she wrote in prose or verse because she loved to write, and when her thoughts were once on paper, cared but little for revision, or the judgment which the world might pass on them.

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[1] This excellent divine died at Newton, Aug. 11, 1843, aged eighty-four years. He spent much time in making a comparison of the different versions and editions of the Bible for the purpose of ascertaining the correct reading. He was a warm friend of Mrs. Rowson and her school.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mais elle a su prouver que sous ses doigts légers
Soupire sans effort la flûte des bergers.
Légouvé, Le Mérite des Femmes, p. 16.

In the autumn of 1804 Mrs. Rowson published by subscription a volume of 227 pages, entitled *Miscellaneous Poems by Susanna Rowson, Preceptress of the Ladies' Academy, Newton, Mass.*[1] The subscribers' names, in all 245, are printed at the beginning of the book, and among them I find those of many of the celebrated personages of the day, as Mrs. Josiah Bradlee, Col. David Humphreys, John H. Payne, Robert Treat Payne, Junr., Esq., Thomas O. Selfridge, Esq., etc., of Boston; Mrs. Charles Baring of Charleston, S. C.; Gen. William Hull and Dr. Jonathan Homer of Newton; Madame Elizabeth Price of Hopkinton; Mr. Leverett Saltonstall of Salem, etc. They were for the most part patrons of her school. In looking over this time worn, but well printed volume, I find a great variety

[1] There is a favorable review of these poems in the *Monthly Anthology*, 1804, vol. I, p. 611, written probably by Mr Tudor, who cites this stanza as a specimen of the author's style:

Yes, they are happy, if the polished gem,
On which the sun in varied colors plays,
Rejoices that its lustre comes from Him,
And glows delighted to reflect his praise.

of poems on different subjects, moral, patriotic, amatory, elegiac, in various metrical forms and of various degrees of merit.

In common with the poets of her day, Mrs. Rowson frequently personifies the faculties of the mind, and makes them play their scenic parts before us. Her versification is generally smooth, her images striking; but she often wrote too rapidly, sometimes too sentimentally, to write well. With much, however, that is affected, and much that bears the marks of haste, we occasionally meet with pieces rich and vigorous in thought, as they are graceful and appropriate in language.

The lines to *Solitude* written at midnight are interesting as a faithful record of the author's own personal experience.

I.

Soft sleep the moonbeams on the stream;
  Light breathes the zephyr through each tree,
Sweet chirps the cricket; all things seem
  Attuned to SOLITUDE and me.

II.

Oh! soul reviving Solitude!
  Only by active minds enjoyed;
Fled by the ignorant and rude,
  And by unfeeling mirth destroyed!

III.

Oh ! let me in the evening shade,
  Stray where the solemn night bird flits;
And where in sober weeds arrayed,
  Eagle-eyed contemplation sits.

IV.

Let her my soaring spirit bear
  To the etherial realms above,
To mix with kindred spirits there
  And join their strains of peace and love.

V.

There friendship which on earth was pure,
  Shall be with double force renewed;
There from malignant fiends secure,
  'Twill be no crime to love the good.

VI.

Few are the moments I can spare,
  Mild SOLITUDE, to pass with thee;
Yet few and scanty as they are,
  How dear those moments are to me.

VII.

Now night her dusky wing hath spread
  And half the world is wrapped in sleep;
Still as the mansions of the dead,
  E'en misery's self forgets to weep.

VIII.

This hour's my own; I need not fear
  Thou wilt my secret soul betray;

Thy sombre vail conceals the tear
Which dreads the glaring eye of day.

IX.

To thee my tortured soul can own
Its faults and sue to be forgiven;
Kneeling before the awful throne
Of the all-righteous God of Heaven.

X.

God! great as good! and wise as great!
To thee each secret stands revealed;
Thou art my hope, in thee I trust,
From thee my heart is not concealed.

XI.

Oh! shed on my perturbed breast
Thy peace, and grant, forgot by all,
When death shall wrap my soul in rest,
Oblivion's shade may o'er me fall.

The *Choice*, though inferior to that of John Pomfret and hardly equal to that of John Cotton, or that of the Rev. Elijah Fitch, is still by no means devoid of merit, and is, so far as I am aware, the only one ever written by a lady:

I ask no more than just to be
From vice and folly wholly free;
To have a competent estate
Neither too small, nor yet too great;

Something of rent and taxes clear,
About five hundred pounds a year.
My house, though small should be complete
Furnished, not elegant, but neat;[1]
One little room should sacred be
To study, solitude and me.
The windows, jessamine should shade
Nor should a sound the ear invade,
Except the warblings from the grove,
Or plaintive murmurings of the dove.
Here would I often pass the day
Turn o'er the page, or tune the lay,
And court the aid and sacred fire
Of the Parnassian tuneful choir.
While calmly thus my time I'd spend
Grant me, kind Heaven, a faithful friend
In each emotion of my heart,
Of grief or joy to bear a part,
Possessed of learning and good sense,
Free from pedantic insolence;

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[1] Jean F. Ducis expresses the corresponding idea thus:

Petit séjour, commode et sain
Où des arts et du luxe en vain
On chercherait quelque merveille;
Humble asile où j'ai sos la main
Mon La Fontaine et mon Corneille.

Pomfret not so elegantly:

It should within no other things contain
But what were useful, necessary, plain;
Methinks 'tis nauseous, and I'd ne'er endure
The needless pomp of gaudy furniture.

Dr. Benjamin Church in his *Choice* has it thus:

No needless pomp my modest dome should claim,
Neat and genteel without; within, the same.

For the latter see *Boston Weekly Magazine,* April 6, 1805.

Pleased with retirement let him be;
Yet cheerful midst society;
Know how to trifle with a grace,
Yet grave in proper time and place.

Let frugal plenty deck my board,
So that its surplus may afford
Assistance to the neighboring poor,
And send them thankful from the door.
A few associates I'd select,
Worthy esteem and high respect;
And social mirth I would invite,
With sportive dance on tip-toe light;
Nor should sweet music's voice be mute,
The vocal strain, or plaintive lute;
But all, and each, in turn agree,
To afford life sweet variety;
To keep serene the cheerful breast,
And give to solitude a zest.

And often be it our employ,
For there is not a purer joy,
To wipe the languid grief-swollen eye,
To soothe the pensive mourner's sigh,
To calm their fears, allay their grief,
And give, if possible, relief.
But if this fate, directing heaven
Thinks too indulgent to be given,
Let health and innocence be mine,
And I will strive not to repine;
Will thankful take each blessing lent,
Be humble, patient and content.

Miscellaneous Poems, p. 137.

Of the sonnets in this volume perhaps the following quoted in Duyckinck's *Cyclopedia of American Literature*, vol. I, p. 533, is the most pleasing.

The primrose gay, the snowdrop pale,
The lily blooming in the vale,
Too fragile or too fair to last,
Wither beneath the untimely blast,
Or rudely falling shower.
No more a sweet perfume they shed,
Their fragrance lost, their beauty fled,
They can revive no more.

So hapless woman's wounded name,
If Malice seize the trump of fame;
Or Envy should her poison shed
Upon the unprotected head
Of some forsaken maid;
Though pity may her fate deplore,
Her virtues sink to rise no more,
From dark oblivion's shade.

Ibid., p. 116.

The following light effusions are conceived in the same happy manner:

TO HOPE.

Gilded phantom, light and vain,
Gay, delusive, fleeting thing;
Flattering shade, descend again,
Bear me on thy downy wing.

What though oft thou dost deceive,
Still I woo thee to my breast,
Listen still and still believe,
Till each doubt is hushed to rest.

To the Rose.

I.

Lovely, blushing, fragrant Rose,
Emblem of life's transient joys,
Ere half thy sweets thou canst disclose,
One rude touch thy bloom destroys.

II.

Though the sweetness thou dost yield,
Can pleasure to each sense impart,
The thorn, beneath thy leaves concealed,
Oft wounds the unsuspecting heart.

In the *Thunder Storm* we have this natural and effective passage, which conveys a good idea of the whole piece:

See where the lightning rends the sturdy oak,
Around the wood the shattered atoms fly;
The savage herd, astonished at the stroke,
Quick to their dens for shelter hie;
The boding raven e'en forgets to croak,
And nature seems in silent agony.

Her *Hymn to the Deity*, though in poetic merit inferior to that of Pope or of Mrs. Carter, still sur-

passes both of them in depth and earnestness of devotion:

I.

Alpha, Omega, first and last,
Creative Spirit, Power Supreme,
Whose hand directs the stormy blast,
Or gilds the morning's ardent beam;

II.

Who spake and from chaotic night
Unnumbered worlds and systems rose;
Whose word is life; whose presence, light,
Whose smiles are health, content, repose.

III.

Where dost thou dwell? Thy throne how high;
Where hast thou fixed thy dwelling place?
Can finite wishes ever fly
E'en to the footstool of thy grace?

IV.

Oh, could I now ascend and stand
Upon the zenith of the globe,
And mark how round, on either hand,
The heavens enwrap it as a robe;

V.

How orbs of pure empyrean light
Around the wondrous system roll;
Revolving seasons day and night,
Visit each land from pole to pole.

VI.

View the vast stores of hail and snow,
The region of the air contains;
Trace whence the genial breezes blow,
Or whence descend refreshing rains;

VII.

Could I ascend the orb of light,
That great, that wondrous type of thee,
And at one wide, extended sight
The unbounded universe could see.

VIII.

Where should I find thee? Still above,
Bright clouds thy majesty enshrine,
Emitting rays of joy and love;
Of joys eternal, love divine.

IX.

Where should I find thee? Need I ask?
Is there a shrub, a plant, a flower,
But makes its daily, hourly task,
To speak thy presence and thy power?

X.

E'en now when silence reigns around,
E'en in this solemn hour of night,
Thy voice is heard; and thou art found
In all thy works revealed to sight.

XI.

Ten thousand insects chant thy praise;
Ten thousand worlds thy power declare;
None from thine eye can hide his ways,
For thou art present everywhere.

XII.

Then teach the atom thou hast made
To trust and hope thy mercy still;
To fear thy wrath, to seek thy aid,
To love thy laws and do thy will." — *Ibid., p.* 55.

Mrs. Rowson had acquired in early life, and while a governess in England, some knowledge of the French and Latin languages, from the former of which she made the translation or paraphrase of the celebrated Marseillaise Hymn — commencing

Columbia's sons awake to glory,
Your Guardian Genius bids you rise —

which, with some alterations, has been adopted as a national song in this country; and from the latter, she rendered into English metre the 10th eclogue of Virgil and five of the odes of Horace. Her version of the 23d ode of Horace, book III, is perhaps equal in spirit to that of Francis and may serve as a fair specimen of the whole.

CŒLO SUPINAS SI TULERIS, ETC.

I.

Phidyle, simple, rustic dame,
If thou hast fanned the sacred flame,
Hast bade the smoke of incense rise,
Or raised thy hands toward the skies,
When the chaste queen of night, now born,
Faintly displays her silver horn:

II.

If thou hast offered ripened grain,
But lately reaped from off the plain,
Hast offered fruits that might suffice,
To appease the household deities;
Invoked their aid with rites divine,
And sacrificed a hungry swine:

III.

If with pure hands and heart sincere,
A conscience from offences clear;
Then shall thy prayers accepted be,
Thy flocks and fields from blight be free;
The gods thy industry shall bless,
And crown thy labors with success.

IV.

Let wealth and power be displayed,
By pompous gifts on altars laid;
Even bread and salt if freely given,
Are more acceptable to heaven;
And the best sacrifice assigned,
Is a pure heart and grateful mind.

Ibid., p. 164.

The *Little Sailor Boy*, written for the author's brother, William Haswell, and set to music was a popular song in its day:

I.

The sea was calm, the sky serene,
And gently blew the western gale,
When Anna, seated on a cliff,
Watched the Lovina's lessening sail.

To Heaven she thus her prayers addressed:
"Thou who canst save, or canst destroy.
From each surrounding danger guard,
My much loved little sailor boy.

II.

"When tempests o'er the ocean howl,
And even sailors shrink with dread,
Be some protecting angel near
To hover round my William's head.
He was beloved by all the plain,
His father's pride, his mother's joy;
Then safely to their arms restore,
Their much loved little sailor boy.

III.

"May no rude foe his course impede,
Conduct him safely o'er the waves.
Oh may he never be compelled
To yield to power or mix with slaves.
May smiling peace his steps attend,
Each rising hour be crowned with joy,
As blest as that when I again,
Shall meet my much loved sailor boy."

Ibid., p. 210.

The song of the *Independent Farmer* trips away in sprightly anapæstic measure, cleverly setting forth the felicities of rural life:

I.

When the bonny gray morning just peeps from the skies,
And the lark mounting tunes her sweet lay,
With a mind unencumbered by care I arise,
My spirits light, airy, and gay.

I take up my gun; honest Tray, my good friend,
Wags his tail and jumps sportively round;
To the woods then together our footsteps we bend,
'Tis there health and pleasure are found.
I snuff the fresh air; bid defiance to care,
As happy as mortal can be,
From the toils of the great, ambition and state,
'Tis my pride and my boast to be free.

II.

At noon I delighted to range o'er the soil,
And nature's rough children regale;
With a cup of good home-brewed I sweeten their toil,
And laugh at the joke or the tale.
And whether the ripe waving corn I behold,
Or the innocent flock meet my sight,
Or the orchard whose fruit is just turning to gold,
Still, still health and pleasure unite.
I snuff the fresh air, bid defiance to care, etc.

III.

At night to my lowly roofed cot I return,
When, Oh! what new sources of bliss;
My children rush out while their little hearts burn,
Each striving to gain the first kiss.
My Dolly appears with a smile on her face;
Good humor presides at our board,
What more than health, plenty, good humor and peace,
Can the wealth of the Indies afford?
I sink into rest with content in my breast,
As happy as mortal can be,
From the toils of the great, ambition and state,
'Tis my pride and my boast to be free.

Ibid,, p. 193.

Her masculine song of *America, Commerce and Freedom* was sung, during the first quarter of this century, all over the country. It is certainly too boisterous for the pen of a lady; but it must be remembered that the author was the daughter of a sailor, and had herself learned to navigate a ship.

I.

How blest the life a sailor leads,
From clime to clime still ranging,
For as the calm the storm succeeds,
The scene delights by changing.
When tempests howl along the main,
Some object will remind us,
And cheer with hopes to meet again,
Those friends we've left behind us.
Then under snug sail, we laugh at the gale,
And though landsmen look pale, never heed 'em,
But toss off a glass to a favorite lass,
To America, Commerce and Freedom.

II.

And when arrived in sight of land,
Or safe in port rejoicing,
Our ships we moor, our sails we hand,
Whilst out the boat is hoisting.
With eager haste, the shore we reach,
Our friends delighted greet us;
And tripping lightly o'er the beach,
The pretty lasses meet us.
When the full flowing bowl has enlivened the soul,
To foot it we merrily lead 'em,
And each bonny lass will drink off a glass,
To America, Commerce and Freedom.

III.

Our cargo sold, the chink we share,
And gladly we receive it,
And if we meet a brother tar
Who wants, we freely give it.
No freeborn sailor yet had store,
But cheerfully would lend it,
And when 'tis gone, to sea for more,
We earn it but to spend it.
Then drink round my boys, tis the first of our joys,
To relieve the distressed, clothe and feed 'em,
'Tis a task which we share with the brave and the fair,
In this land of Commerce and Freedom.

Ibid., p. 201.

Truxton's Victory was for a while more popular even than the two preceding songs. The spirit of those stirring political times is finely portrayed, and the story of our most important naval encounter with France well told:

I.

When Freedom, fair Freedom her banner displayed,
Defying each foe whom her rights would invade,
Columbia's brave sons swore their rights to maintain,
And o'er ocean and earth to establish her reign.
United they cry,
While that standard shall fly,
Resolved, firm and steady,
We always are ready
To fight and to conquer; to conquer or die.

II.

Though Gallia through Europe has rushed like a flood,
And deluged the earth with an ocean of blood;
While by faction she's led, while she's governed by knaves,
We court not her smiles and we'll ne'er be her slaves.
Her threats we defy,
While our standard shall fly,
Resolved, firm and steady,
We always are ready
To fight and to conquer; to conquer or die.

III.

Though France with caprice, dares our statesmen upbraid,
A tribute demands, or sets bounds to our trade;
From our young rising navy our thunders shall roar,
And our commerce extend to the earth's utmost shore.
Our cannon we'll ply,
While our standard shall fly,
Resolved, firm and steady,
We always are ready
To fight and to conquer; to conquer or die.

IV.

To know we're resolved, let them think on the hour,
When Truxton,[1] brave Truxton off Nevis's shore,
His ship manned for battle, the standard unfurled,
And at the Insurgente defiance he hurled.

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[1] The action between the Constellation, 38 guns, Commodore Thomas Truxton and the French frigate, L'Insurgente, 40 guns Capt. Barreault, took place off Nevis on the 9th of February, 1799. After an hour's sharp engagement the enemy struck her colors, having twenty-nine killed and forty-four wounded. We had

And his valiant war cry,
While our standard shall fly,
Resolved, firm and steady,
We always are ready
To fight and to conquer; to conquer or die.

V.

Each heart beat exulting, inspired by the cause,
They fought for their country, their freedom and laws;
From their cannon loud volleys of vengeance they poured,
And the standard of France to Columbia was lowered.
Huzzah! they now cry,
Let the eagle wave high,
Resolved, firm and steady
We always are ready
To fight and to conquer; to conquer or die.

VI.

Then raise high the strain, pay the tribute that's due
To the fair Constellation and all her brave crew,
Be Truxton revered and his name be enrolled
'Mongst the chiefs of the ocean, the heroes of old.
Each invader defy,
While such heroes are nigh,
Who always are ready,
Resolved, firm and steady
To fight and to conquer; to conquer or die.

Ibid., p. 212.

Since our literature has been enriched by the sweet and elevated strains of Amelia Welby, Hannah

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only one man killed and two wounded. Commodore Truxton died at Philadelphia, May 5, 1822, aged sixty-seven. See *History of the Navy of the U. S. A.*, by J. F. Cooper, vol. I, p. 168.

F. Gould, Lydia H. Sigourney, Alice and Phœbe Carey, Sarah Jane Lippincott, and other female favorites of the muse, these poems of Mrs. Rowson would hardly seem to merit the attention I have bestowed on them; yet it must be borne in mind that they were written when the author of *Ouabi* and *Honora Martesia*[1] were almost the only rivals of her sex in the field; and by a lady whose early education was often interrupted by the vicissitudes of fortune; whose associates were connected with the army, navy and the stage; whose domestic state was far from being happy, and whose time was mostly occupied in the ceaseless struggle for daily bread. Reflecting, as they do, the spirit, taste, and manners of an age immediately succeeding the American revolution, they seem to be worthy of a place in some small corner in the library of every one interested in the early history and progress of our literature. Though too often painting the frailties of women, they, nevertheless, breathe sentiments of ardent patriotism and of reverence for religion and for God. Her later poems, as her later life, it will be seen, are more serious, elevated and devotional.

[1] The *soubriquet* of Mrs. John Murray. Her maiden name was Judith Sargent. She was the sister of Governor Sargent of Mississippi, and died at Natchez, June 6th, 1820, aged sixty-nine years. She sometimes wrote under the name of *Constantia*.

CHAPTER XIV.

Et c'est la bonté qu'on chérit.
Voltaire.

In the spring of 1805, Mrs. Rowson received the sad intelligence of the death of her beloved father, who died at Newport, Wallinsgton, near South Cave, Yorkshire, England, on the 26th of February, at the age of seventy-three years. In speaking of his decease the *Boston Weekly Magazine* says: "He married about the year 1769, for his second wife, a New England lady, and bringing over an infant daughter settled near Boston, and continued an inhabitant here until the third year of the revolutionary war. He was a man of integrity, and a gentleman, and has given four valuable citizens to this commonwealth. His eldest son, Captain Robert Haswell is supposed lately to have been lost on a voyage to the north-west coast; his second son commands a vessel out of this port; his youngest son is a lieutenant in the United States navy, and his only daughter, Mrs. Susanna Rowson, is preceptress of the young ladies' academy in Newton." [1]

[1] See *Boston Weekly Magazine*, August 31, 1805.

Although Mrs. Rowson had as many as sixty young ladies, thirty of whom resided in her family, to instruct daily, she still found time this year to prepare for the press an *Abridgment of Universal Geography,*[1] *and History* from the works of Guthrie, Walker and Morse. It contains the subject matter of her instructions in these important branches of education. She had been accustomed for several years to write out exercises for her pupils to transcribe and commit to memory. These lessons she carefully revised and gave to the press. The work is well arranged and written in a lucid and entertaining style. It proved to be of great service in her own, as well as in other kindred institutions. Had it appeared on good paper, and had it contained, as the cotemporaneous works of Morse and Parish, a series of illustrative maps and charts, it would undoubtedly have had a far more extensive circulation. Her excellent mode of treating and teaching history, may be seen from the closing page of the book:

"How were the United States governed after the revolution?

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[1] The title is: "*An Abridgment of Universal Geography,* together with sketches of History. Designed for the use of schools and academies in the United States. By Susanna Rowson. Boston: Printed for John West, No. 75 Cornhill. David Carlisle, Printer,

"By a congress, consisting of senators assisted by representatives from each state; but a constitution hastily formed was not likely to be permanent, and in 1789 it was thought necessary to new form it when by the wisdom of those able statesmen who undertook the arduous task, it was new modelled and fixed on a solid and permanent foundation; and as it was thought necessary that such a great people should have a chief magistrate at the head of their government, on the 3d of March, 1789, George Washington, Esq., was chosen first president of the United States of America, by the unanimous voice of more than three millions of freemen. He filled this dignified station with honor to himself, and satisfaction to the states, till the year 1797, when he resigned the presidency, and retired to the enjoyment of domestic peace in the bosom of his family at Mount Vernon. In 1798, he accepted the appointment of commander-in-chief of the American forces. Convinced that the exigence of the times required his assistance, he gave a noble proof that his own private happiness was of but little value in his own estimation, when put in competition with the public weal. But the

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Cambridge street. 1805. 12mo, pp. 302." It is favorably reviewed on page 304 of the *Literary Miscellany*, published at Cambridge, 1806.

days of his glory are past. In December, 1799, this great and good man received his passport to the regions of immortality. Alas, for Columbia! the shades of death rest upon him; the silence of the tomb surrounds him; but his pure spirit rejoices in the regions of eternal day; and the humblest child of genius may snatch a laurel to save her labors from oblivion, while she twines a wreath to consecrate his name.

I.

"Heroes have been renowned in ancient days,
And various poets have their praises sung;
And Scipio's, Cæsar's, Alexander's praise
Known in all ages, told in every tongue.

II.

But o'er these heroes' fame some dusky shade,
Hangs to eclipse their virtues, else divine;
But one whom vice, nor folly could mislead,
Ne'er lived but once;—Columbia, he was thine.

III.

Envy stood mute, she could no blemish find,
And when translated to his native sky,
Fame linked with gratitude a wreath entwined,
Fair as his virtues which can never die."

Two years later Mrs. Rowson published, from her own autograph transcriptions for her school,

a *Spelling Dictionary divided into Short Lessons for the easier committing to Memory by Children and Young Persons.*"[1] The second edition, published at Portland, by Isaac Adams, 1815, lies before me. As most of the school books of that day, it is printed with miserable type and ink on a kind of coarse brown wrapping paper and bound in boards. It contains one hundred and fifty-six pages of words carefully divided into syllables and defined; together with a concise account of the heathen deities at the close. In the advertisement to this edition she says: "It has been my study for eighteen years to render the little talent with which I have been entrusted beneficial to society; and I can truly say that the happiest moments of my life have been those in which I have been employed in the instruction of the young and uninformed. Should it please God to continue my life and indulge me with a moderate portion of health, I hope in a short time to give unquestionable proofs that the permanent good of the rising generation is the object nearest my heart."[2]

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[1] The collectors of early American school books consider this, as indeed all of Mrs. Rowson's educational works, quite rare. A copy of the original edition was sometime ago presented to the library of Harvard College by the Hon. Charles Sumner.

[2] Reference is here made to the Biblical Dialogues which she was then preparing. See preface to the same, vol. I, p. 6.

Mrs. Rowson ever held the pupils entrusted to her care in affectionate remembrance, and continued in correspondence with many of them to the end of life. She delighted to learn of their prosperity and generously befriended them in adversity. Her letters to her pupils are models both in respect to elegance of language and tenderness of sentiment. Though far away from them, she was still their teacher and every epistle a new lesson. Here is one of them:

BOSTON, Jan. 8, 1808.

I know my dear M. you would hardly pardon me were I to permit your sister to return without a line. She has made a long visit in Boston, and has gratified me by passing a day or two here. I fear she has found our family very dull after the frequent pleasurable parties she has mixed with in town; but if the time has seemed heavy to her, I must feel the more obliged to her for affording me so much of it. Your sister Myra is a very fine girl, and what is of more consequence, a very good one. She has been *embargoed* at school by a wise papa and has submitted without a repining look or word. I do assure you she bids fair to become a great favorite.

I understand that you are about to discard the name of Montgomery and adopt another, which though not more valued, is still dearer to the affections from the strong and binding tie by which you will acquire it. I could write volumes on this subject, but I should say nothing new; nor anything but what your own good sense will naturally suggest. Allow me then simply to offer my best wishes for your happiness and to say that to hear of, or to witness it

will ever give me pleasure. When you visit Boston I hope you will pass a little time with me. My respects attend your mother and remembrances to all inquiring friends, and believe me ever yours in sincerity,

S. Rowson.

On the death of a sister of the above mentioned lady, Miss Juliana Knox, who had been Mrs. Rowson's pupil, she wrote the following beautiful elegiac lines:

I.

Peace to the heart that mourns, the eye that weeps,
The lovely maiden is not dead, but sleeps.
Where seraphs minister round Jehovah's throne,
Her unembodied, spotless soul has flown;
And kindred angels tuned their golden lyres,
Their bosoms glowing with celestial fires,
To guide her through the doubtful, gloomy way,
Safe to the realms of everlasting day;
Welcomed their sister to the house of rest.
The bright, eternal mansions of the blest,
There mixing with the bright celestial train,
Exulting she will join the adoring strain,
To Him who was, and is,
And shall forever reign.

II.

Oh mother! most afflicted, sure if e'er
Maternal love was Heaven's peculiar care,
Thy silent tears, thine agonizing sighs
Before the great Eternal will arise.
Cease then thy plaints, look up with faith, behold,
They in the magic volume are enrolled;

Registered in the awful court of Heaven,
Who only has recalled what it had given.
Religion, smiling as she marks the page
Cries, "Let this hope the mother's pangs assuage;
Though the unspotted angels went before.
The hour will come when grief shall be no more;
Then shalt thou see those much loved forms again,[1]
And join with them in the adoring strain,
To Him who was, and is,
And shall forever reign." [2]

To another beloved pupil in sickness she tenderly wrote:

My dear Hannah:

I have just received a present of some fresh oranges and a box of guava. I send you a part of each and wish I could as easily send you health and spirits; but that both these valuable gifts may speedily be enjoyed again by you is the ardent desire of yours affectionately,

SUSANNA ROWSON.

ACROSTIC (to the same).

Have you not seen the eastern sky
Adorned with streaks of burnished gold,
Now breaking gorgeous to the eye,
Now with a sable cloud enrolled.
And ere the sun could dart his burning ray,
How vapors dank, obscured the face of day?

[1] Mrs. Knox lost four children in two years, two of whom were grown up.

[2] *Miscellaneous Poems*, p. 141.

So joy oft gilds life's early scene,
When, ere fair reason's sun has power,
A sombre cloud will intervene,
Nor pleasure gild the prospect more.

Dear Hannah, may your morn as brightly shine,
And your meridian be
From those dank vapors free
Which overshadowed mine.

On the death of Miss Eliza Bradley, another pupil, she wrote these touching lines:

I.

Fair as the lily of the vale,
As sweet, as fragrant and as frail,
The unoffending maid
Just oped her beauties to the day,
But ere 'twas noon she drooped away,
Born just to bloom and fade.

II.

If there's a heaven beyond the sky.
Where unpolluted spirits fly,
Her's surely found the road.
On seraph's wings pursued its way,
Left its frail tenement of clay,
And sought its parent God,

The ensuing letter, written to Miss Louisa Bliss, a favorite pupil, discloses the author's political views and feelings at this eventful period:

BOSTON, Jan. 8, 1808.

Does not my dear Louisa accuse her friend of neglect? I must submit, though not actually guilty, for if my pen was silent, my thoughts have frequently reverted to you and often, very often do I speak of you. I enquire after you of every one who comes from Haverhill and trifles become of consequence if they concern Louisa Bliss. Mrs. Graupner is highly gratified with your polite mention of her. She begs me to present her respects to yourself and mother, and to say that if ever her fortune leads her again your way, she will certainly pay you a visit. What thinks your good father of the present times? Hard enough, no doubt; and so they are; nor is the present gloom of the political atmosphere half so alarming as the thick cloud which hovers in the horizon of domestic peace, since for foreign war an united nation may be prepared. And what foreign enemy could cope with the unanimous power of so mighty a nation as the American states; were their commerce free and their forests converted into towers of defence to protect that commerce from insult and invasion; were our citizens all of one mind; were our statesmen wise and our lawgivers virtuous. But say the opposite party, if the spirit of commerce is so much encouraged, manufactures will languish and the handicrafts be banished the land. And indeed in some measure this is true; but a country as young as this has never been known to arrive at any high pitch of excellence in the arts, whether social, or those of a higher class without the assistance of commerce. Few would be found in a situation able sufficiently to reward the ingenious artificer. It is therefore

our part, I humbly conceive, at present, to profit by the great advantages an extensive commerce affords, and by degrees the social arts will rise into estimation; by degrees they will rise into perfection, and future ages will in all probability see new and as yet undiscovered countries receiving the overplus of their manufactures coming to their seaports as to chief marts for merchandize, when the now imperial cities on the other side of the Atlantic, like Troy, Carthage, Greece and Rome, are sunk into insignificance. Nay, pass but a few centuries more and like Balbec, Palmyra and Jerusalem, their places be only distinguished by a heap of ruins. These reflections, my Louisa, should perhaps lead us to be indifferent as to present circumstances, since every sublunary scene so rapidly fades from our view; but it has pleased the all wise Director of the universe to implant in our minds a patriotic principle which vibrates with delight in beholding, promoting or insuring the prosperity of our native land. For though I am by birth a Briton, my heart always clings to dear America, and it would be with equal anxiety I should contemplate the misery of either country. Power of all might, may the waves of thy ocean ever be the bulwark of revered old England, and may the good angels with peace dropping from their pinions hover over beloved America. Defend us from civil discord and let not her fertile plains be drenched with the blood of her brave sons, slaughtered by each other. You will be weary, my sweet young friend, with my serious political letter, but old folks will write and talk of what is nearest the heart; and when they once begin they know not where to stop.

Will you pardon me for not returning your flower pieces. Miss Ann Montgomery and Miss Frances Price have been copying them and have not quite finished them. I wish I knew of anything I have that would return the favor of

having been allowed to keep them so long. If you can think of anything, mention it freely and it will give me pleasure to comply. Mr. Rowson joins me in most friendly remembrances to your parents. Give Caroline a kiss for me and teach your little sister to speak my name. Adieu, beloved Louisa. Rest assured of the affection of your friend.

SUSAN ROWSON.

CHAPTER XV.

"We are bound to do benefits."—*Timon of Athens*, Act I.

In the autumn of 1807[1] Mrs. Rowson, in connection with her sister-in-law, Mrs. Mary Cordis Haswell, opened her school in Washington street, near Roxbury in a commodious building now known as the Washington House; employing Mr. Gotlieb Graupner as teacher of music and Mr. George Shaffer as dancing master.[2] The superior merits of the principal had now become well known throughout the whole country, and pupils from the north, east, south, and west, continued to gather round her to receive the living words of wisdom she so gracefully imparted. Other female schools were good, but hers was excellent; and happy was the young lady of that day who had the means to enter the old Washington House and mingle in the animated throng that plied the busy needle, performed the literary task, or learned the music lesson in its pleasant halls and chambers.[3]

[1] Mr. Knapp says erroneously in 1810.

[2] Old Doctor Shaffer, as they called him, was for a long time known as second violin player in the Boston theatre. See *Personal Memoirs* of *J. T. Buckingham*, vol. II, p. 52, note.

[3] Her annual exhibition subsequent to the transfer of her school

Although generous by nature and educating several young ladies at her own expense, Mrs. Rowson made so much money by her seminary that in December, 1809, Mr. Rowson, then a clerk in the custom house, had the means to purchase of Elisha Adams and John Foster, for the sum of $4,600, an eligible estate on Hollis street, nearly opposite the Hollis street church, where his wife established her school in 1811, placing her tuition at $12 per quarter, and where she continued her labors as a teacher until compelled in 1822, regretfully to relinquish them for that repose which her declining health and age demanded.

Soon after opening her school on Hollis street Mrs. Rowson published (1811) her *Present for Young Ladies*,[1] containing poems, dialogues, etc., a little book of some two hundred pages, wherein many of those pieces recited by her pupils with so much éclat at her exhibitions, appeared. It proved of signal service to the principals of other kindred institutions and some of the dialogues are selected for the school examination still. They very gracefully rebuke the

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to the Washington House occurred Nov. 19, 1807. The tickets of admission were fifty cents. The spring term of the next year began on the 11th of April. Mrs. Haswell and Messrs. Graupner and Shaffer continuing with her. The annual exhibition took place at the academy, November 10; the price of admission being the same.

[1] Ante, p. 113, note.

improprieties and frivolities of girlhood, and point ingeniously to the rewards of virtue and obedience. They also, as faithful mirrors, reflect the spirit, order, life and animation of the author's school room.

Dialogue— Mary and Lucretia.

Mary.

Do stop, Miss Lucretia, pray why in such haste,
And where in the world are you running so fast?

Lucretia.

Pray, Miss, don't detain me, I'm going to school,
And our governess long has established a rule:
She who for three months the most neatly is dressed,
Comes the soonest to school says her lesson the best,
Shall receive from her hand the reward of a book,
And what's more, a kind word, an affectionate look.
For ten weeks I've been there e'er the bell has struck nine,
And in one fortnight more the dear prize will be mine.

Mary.

Well dear, 'twas but eight a few minutes ago,
To stop just a moment, you've time enough now.
What's the prize of a book? such nonsensical stuff.
If I want new books aunt can give me enough.
I abominate reading, it makes one so dumpish.
And as to our governess; la, she's so frumpish.
"Miss, do mind your work, do, child. sit upright.
Miss, your frock is unpinned; dear, how badly you write."
Then if I am late she cries: "Miss how you stay;
I believe in my heart you love nothing but play."
Love play! to be sure I do, so do you all,
Yes, it's truth; the great misses as well as the small.

Some primitive miss may protest that she don't,
And you may believe, if you please, but I wont.

Lucretia.

Dear me, how you talk, child, I'm really amazed;
Such a parcel of stuff, I believe you are crazed.
Pray what do you think our dear friends would all do,
If all little girls were as giddy as you?
I own I love play; yes, none more admires it;
Yet I cheerfully work when my dear aunt requires it.
I make all the linen for her and my brother;
Indeed I should blush were they made by another.
To assist in the household concerns I arise
With the sun; nay, I sometimes make puddings and pies,
See the sheets and the tablecloths kept in repair,
Help wash, rinse and starch when the weather is fair;
For we heard my aunt say: "Who lead indolent lives
Are indifferent daughters and make wretched wives."

Mary.

Wives! well, 'twere worth while to be married indeed,
Were one forced to do nothing but work, write and read.
Why, dear, when one's married the principal merit
Is dancing with elegance, betting with spirit,
At whist or at loo; Mrs. Giddy makes light
If she only should lose fifty dollars a night,
And Miss Tattle told me a lady she knew
Made nothing of losing a hundred or two;
And d'ye think when I'm married that I'll be confined,
At home to make pies, or the servants to mind?
No, child, I shall marry to live at my ease,
Eat, drink, dance and dress, and do just as I please;
But la, we're fine folks to be prating away
About marriage indeed, come, let's go to play.

Lucretia.

Play! no, my dear Mary, though I did not choose
To hasten to school, I should surely refuse,
To spend my time idly; for I have to make
Full fifty new garments for charity's sake;
For, dear, do you know many children there be,
As good, nay, perhaps who are better than we,
Without any home where to shelter their head,
Without clothes, without fire, sometimes without bread?

Mary.

Dear me, is that true? now indeed I'm ashamed;
But I hope I am not very much to be blamed;
Though yesterday morning I gave half a dollar
To buy little Pompey a pretty new collar.
And had I but known some poor child as you say
Might be hungry, I would not have thrown it away;
But, see here, the last week when my aunt was in town,
She gave me to keep for her sake this French crown.
She bade me be sure and not foolishly spend it;
But I'm certain she did not forbid me to lend it;
T'will buy them some linen, Lucretia, do take it,
You buy it, and though I hate work, I'll help make it.

Lucretia.

How good you are, Mary, I blush when I see
In virtue you rise thus superior to me.
The prize of true merit is surely your due;
And certain I am if our governess knew
How much you deserved it, she'd give it to you.

Mary.

No, no, it is yours for my merit is small,
And compared with Lucretia 'tis nothing at all.
My flippancy henceforth I'll strive to correct,
And to be like yourself, free from every defect.

Lucretia.

And I thy benevolent spirit will join
To the little industrious spirit of mine,
To be good as I can I'll exert my best power.

Mary.

When I've nothing to give, why I'll work for the poor.

Exeunt.

Aside from the arduous duties of the school room, Mrs. Rowson found time to visit and console the widow and the fatherless, to mingle in the brilliant scenes of social life, and to furnish contributions both in prose and poetry for the Boston press.

On the proclamation of peace at the close of the war in 1815, her house on Hollis street was most brilliantly illuminated with transparencies and appropriate mottoes; indicating the joy of her heart at the reconciliation between the imperious mother and her unconquerable daughter. Of her interest in the dissemination of the gospel, her catholicity of spirit and of her unwearied literary labor, the ensuing letter to one of her early pupils, furnishes pleasing evidence:

HOLLIS STREET, BOSTON, Aug. 11, 1816.

Dear Hannah:[1]

I fear you think me very negligent, and in some degree I plead guilty to the charge; but perhaps you yourself have

[1] Miss Hannah Swan, of Medford.

experienced that what may be done at any time is perhaps seldom done at all. This has been the case in regard to the ode and hymn I promised to send you. I will thank you to return the former as I have not another copy; the latter is much at your service. It was written for the first anniversary of the Prayer Book and Tract Society, established in Boston, for sending prayer books and religious tracts to the new settlements in the district of Maine. Perhaps you may think that we are laboring to disseminate the tracts of the Episcopal church; but that is not the chief aim. The prayer book contains excellent extracts from the New Testament, the Psalms, both in prose and verse, excellent prayers for all occasions, and a very comprehensive, plain catechism. These may be of service to assist the unenlightened and ignorant; and though, my dear Hannah, there are some tenets which I hold peculiarly sacred, yet I am no bigot to any party, or sect. I am so sensible of my own blindness and infirmity that I can only pray in the words of Pope:

"If I am right, assist me still,
In that best path to stray.
If I am wrong, oh! teach me how
To find the better way."

I send you the life of Frey, the converted Jew, which you will please to send to Mrs. Gilchrist when you have perused it. I hope my dear Ann is better, and that you are all enjoying a desirable portion of health and spirits. My affectionate remembrance to my beloved friends, Susan, Peggy and your dear self. Yours with esteem,

SUSANNA ROWSON.

CHAPTER XVI.

Et, se sentant animée par l'amour de son pays, elle se fit entendre dans des vers pleins de charme. — CORRINNE, Chapitre III.

Of the *New England Galaxy*, commenced in 1817, Mrs. Rowson became, in the words of its editor,[1] "an acceptable and highly valued correspondent"; her contributions were chiefly of a religious and devotional character[1] and usually signed with her initials S. R.[2] In looking over the files of this ably conducted journal, I find several communications

[1] In an article in the *Galaxy*, February 6, 1818, the writer justly says: Mrs. Rowson, author of *Charlotte Temple* and numerous other works, much read and admired, is a writer of no ordinary mind. To advance knowledge, excite virtue and cherish philanthropy, have been her objects and her aim. With powers to make herself distinguished, she has been content to be useful. If she has lost any portion of that world of fame which was within her reach, it has not been by reclining in idleness, or running after the golden apples; but in tarrying to cultivate the delicate flowers and savory herbs in the garden of youthful intellect, in teaching that the highest knowledge is goodness and the purest fame is virtue. Her pen has never been employed but to give elevation to sentiment, chastity to feeling, dignity to argument, and to make religion lovely and alluring to the young and gay. Her muse of vigorous wing and purest flame has been satisfied in decking the cradle of affection or the bier of friendship, in wreathing the garland for the tomb of the patriot and pouring her sweetest incense on the altar of devotion. Truly it may be said of her that she has written

"No line which dying she could wish to blot."

[2] See *Personal Memoirs by J. T. Buckingham*, vol. I, p. 83, where an interesting sketch of Mrs. Rowson's life is given.

under the well known signature, which are alike creditable to the author's head and heart. The following beautiful ode to the memory of John Warren, M. D., appears in the issue of Feb. 13, 1818. It was written at the request of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts and sung in Concert Hall immediately after the oration by W. J. Bartlett, Esq:

RECITATIVE.

Be wreaths of glory for the hero's name;
August his deeds and sacred be his fame;
But flowers of rich perfume shall deck the grave
Of him who lived to succor and to save.
And Cassia's blossoms twine with Sharon's rose
Where our dear brother's relics now repose.

Air.

I.

Thy Memory, O Warren, will ever be dear,
Whilst any the sense of thy virtue retains,
Fraternal affection with gratitude's tear,
Shall blend on the marble that shrouds thy remains.
For bright as the arch that through heaven extends,
Was the genius that flashed from thy luminous mind,
And soft as the dew on the dry earth descends,
Was the pity that led thee to succor mankind.

II.

How sweet was the voice that instructed our youth!
What wisdom, what science that voice could impart,
How bright was that face where the radiance of truth,
Beamed over each feature, direct from the heart!

Let sorrow each ensign of glory enshroud,
[When Sol is eclipsed we his presence deplore]
For sad is the hour, dark, sombre the cloud,—
Warren's voice will be heard and his face seen no more.

III.

Then build the fair cenotaph, true to each block,
That raises the column his fame to record,
And O! may that column of time bear the shock;
Upright as his actions, and firm as his word.
But where is the man on this sublunar ball,
The jewels of honor so worthy to wear?
Since our brother obeyed the Great Architect's call,
And the bright gem of Hope is bedimmed with a tear.

CHORUS.

Who shall, sweet Hope, on thee rely,
Who lift the full confiding eye,
Who, resting on thy promise, die,
If not the just?
Freed from a world of care and pain,
His body shall in rest remain,
Till the Great Master's voice again,
Shall animate his dust.

FULL CHORUS.

See Religion's sacred ray
Chase the cloud of grief away,
While welcomed by the eternal eye
Our Warren's spirit mounts the sky.

S. R.

In the issue of May 15, of the same year, appears a scriptural piece, which, as it is believed to be the

only one of the kind which Mrs. Rowson wrote, and possesses considerable poetic merit, I venture to transcribe. It is entitled

THE WEDDING SUPPER. [*Matt.* 22.]

I.

The marriage supper was prepared;
The king invited many a guest;
Nor Jew, nor Pagan was forbade
To enter and partake the feast.

II.

The king provided wedding robes
Which all who asked, might have to wear.
The hour arrived; the supper served,
But no invited guest was there.

III.

"Go," said the king, "through streets and lanes,
And see who wants refreshment most.
Bid them come in; I should be grieved
If this my wedding feast were lost.

IV.

"Press them to come; they need not mind
How mean and poor their garments are,
I shall for all who willing come
A spotless wedding robe prepare."

V.

Now from all parts, the sick, the lame,
Dressed in new garments thronged the board,
Bounteous their fare and light their hearts;
Gracious their condescending Lord.

VI.

But one there was who full of self,
Too proud the Prince's robe to wear,
Thought his own garments good enough:
"Friend," said the prince, "how camest thou here?

VII.

"Didst thou not know that every guest
Should in a wedding garment shine?
Thou mightst have had one hadst thou asked
Without the least expense of thine."

VIII.

Aghast he stood, for he had thought
By outward garments decked with pride
From the king's penetrating eye,
His inward filth and rags to hide.

IX.

"Go, bear him forth!" O! gracious Lord,
Thy sentence dare I not repeat,
I feel like him I want the robe
When at the board I take my seat.

X.

Naked, a beggar here I come,
To crave admission to thy feast;
Clothe me in thy own righteousness
And I shall be a welcome guest.

S. R.

In the number for June 19th, I find a hymn combining strength and beauty and which seems worthy of a place in our collections of psalmody:

The Mighty Lord.

I.

Who that beholds the billows rise
In foaming mountains to the skies,
Or marks the ship in safety brave
Their fury and surmount the wave,
Or views them late in terrors drest,
Sinking in murmurs soft to rest,
And doubts but there's a mighty Lord
Who rules the ocean by his word!

II.

Ah! who can see the glorious sun
His daily race of splendor run;
Or trace the planets in their spheres,
In which they've rolled for thousand years;
See man, chief wonder of the whole
With power of speech and reasoning soul;
And doubt but there's a mighty Lord
Who rules creation by his word!

III.

Who that observeth genial spring,
Its yearly wreaths and blossoms bring,
Or summer bland with tempered heat,
Laden with sheaves of golden wheat;
Or gather in rich autumn's spoil
Of corn and fruit and wine and oil,
And doubt but there's a mighty Lord
Who feeds his creatures by his word!

IV.

Yes! mighty Lord, thou God alone,
Who in the person of thy son,
'Twixt wrath divine in mercy stood,
And ransomed sinners with thy blood,
Ah! who can know such boundless love,
And not thy faithful servant prove,
Or feel they want such wondrous grace
But in the dust must hide their face?

S. R.

For the 4th of July of that year, Mrs. Rowson wrote a stirring, patriotic ode which was rapturously sung to an air composed by Dr. Samuel Arnold, author of that of *Anacreon in Heaven*, or the *Star Spangled Banner*.

I.

Strike, strike the chord, raise, raise the strain,
Let joy reecho round each plain,
Your banners be unfurled;
Hail, hail the day, when deathless fame
Gave to Columbia rank and name
Amid the astonished world.
The muses match their lyres sublime,
To publish Jove's decree,
Columbia to the end of time,
Shall flourish great and free.

II.

Hail, hail the day when hand in hand,
Patriots and heroes, glorious band,

Breathed forth a solemn vow,
Freedom to purchase, or to die,
While Jove's own bird with flaming eye
Perched on their chieftain's brow.
Bellona's martial clarions sound,
To publish Jove's decree,
Columbia shall to-day be crowned,
A nation great and free.

III.

Hark, hark, the woodlands catch the strain,
Pan and his sylvans beat the plain,
In wild, fantastic round,
While from the rustic grots and bowers,
The virgin train fling odorous flowers,
And cheerful rebecks sound.
Chaste Dian's nymphs with tuneful horn,
Reecho Jove's decree.
A nation has this day been born:
Columbia, great and free.

IV.

O'er her primeval martyrs' grave
Let freedom's banners proudly wave:
Immortal be their names.
Sound, sound the charge, let cannon roar
From hill to hill, from shore to shore,
To celebrate their fame.
Old Neptune bids his tritons sound
Jove's mandate o'er the sea;
Columbia must e'en here be crowned
Victorious, great and free.

CHAPTER XVII.

"But the greatest of these is charity."—ST. PAUL.

Among those branches of learning which Mrs. Rowson loved to teach, geography was perhaps the most conspicuous. Her organ of locality, as the phrenologist would say, was prominent, and led her to associate events with places. Her lively imagination delighted to explore the distant regions of the globe, to traverse the seas, to climb the mountains, examine the natural curiosities, and mark the manners of the people. With her fine descriptive powers, she presented the results of her own researches vividly to her pupils. Mastering herself the science, and throwing her own enkindling spirit into it, she taught it with ever fresh delight, and her scholars found it, not that dry and barren field which modern systems and inferior teachers render it, but a delightful garden teeming with rarest flowers and golden fruits. One of her methods of teaching this charming study was to make an occasional tour with her pupils, noticing things remarkable as they went, entirely round the globe. These entertaining voyages she prepared for the press in 1818, and

published them under the title of *Youth's First Steps in Geography*, being a series of exercises making the tour of the habitable globe. The style is clear as crystal; the subject matter admirably selected and arranged, so as to engage the attention to the end. The method is sensible, and still, to some extent, prevails.

The advertisement of the school for the spring term of 1819, indicates the studies then pursued. Music and dancing, owing perhaps to the teacher's declining years, are no longer introduced.

"Mrs. Rowson's academy, Hollis street, near the meeting house. Mrs. Rowson begs leave to inform her friends and the public in general that her spring term commences on Monday the 5th of April next. Terms of admission are, for reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, geography, composition, plain work, marking, etc., etc., per quarter, $8. Any or all the above, together with painting landscapes, figures and flowers, embroidery and print work, $12. Use of books, pens and ink, fifty cents. Children under eight years of age, $6. Two young ladies can be admitted to board in the family. A young lady who has been studying sometime with Mrs. Rowson, wishes a situation as an assistant in an academy." [1]

In the autumn of 1820, Mrs. Rowson wrote an ode remarkable for elevation, tenderness and beauty of thought and diction, for the anniversary of the

[1] See *New England Galaxy*, April 2, 1819.

Fatherless and Widow's Society,[1] of which she herself was the honored president. The music was composed by her friend, Mr. John Bray.[2] The meeting took place in Boylston Hall, Oct. 11, when after an eloquent oration by Edward Everett, the Handel and Haydn Society sang with fine effect the original piece prepared by the best talent then in Boston for the occasion. The ode is appropriately entitled:

CHARITY.

Recitative.

Touch the soft chord, the tuneful notes prolong,
To Heaven-born Charity we raise the song.
Oh! white-robed seraph, quit the realms above,
Led by thy sisters, Faith and Heavenly Love.
Teach us such aid and comfort to impart,
As soothes the suffering, heals the broken heart;

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[1] The Boston Fatherless and Widow's Society was instituted in 1817, and incorporated in 1837. Its noble and praiseworthy design is to search out objects of charity and to assist them with fuel, garments and stores. Old and infirm widows and very young children are the first to receive attention. The first president was Mrs. Sophia O. Lincoln. Mrs. Rowson was the second, or third. She was also a life member, and most earnestly devoted her time, talents, and money to the promotion of its growth and efficiency. By sweet experience she realized that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." The number of members in 1820, was three hundred and eighty-one. The society is still accomplishing an incalculable amount of good under the presidency of Mrs. James F. Baldwin.

[2] Mr. John Bray, comedian and composer, was born in Leeds, England, June 19, 1782, and was bred a merchant. Becoming

And may our souls in grateful thanks arise
Like incense at the hour of sacrifice.

Air.

I.

The brightest of gems is humanity's tear,
The heart's purest offering is brotherly love,
And the hand which dispenses its benefits here,
Lays up a rich treasure in mansions above.

II.

Sarepta's lorn widow, though famine was near,
Yet shared with the prophet her last poor regale,
For she trusted the voice of the heaven-taught seer,
That her oil should not waste, that her meal should not fail.

III.

The poor widow's mite in the treasury cast,
Was more than high gifts from the Pharisee's hoard,
She cast it in cheerfully, though 'twas her last,
And obtained, blessed meed, the applause of her Lord.

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interested in private theatricals, he was finally induced to try his fortune on the stage. He came to this country with a corps of theatrical performers under Warren, in 1805, married Miss Sarah Sophia Hunt of Philadelphia, in 1808, and settled in Boston, 1815, where he was long known as a favorite comic actor and skillful composer. He understood both French and Latin, and translated *Who Pays the Piper* and other plays from the former language into English, for the stage. He is the author of the *Toothache,* a farce; the *Astrologer,* the *Simpleton, Child of the Mountain,* etc. He was a good performer on the piano, and among his most merito-

Recitative.

For he hath said whose word unchanged remains,
Who for my sake shall set the prisoner free,
Who clothes the naked, soothes the sufferer's pains,
At my right hand eternal life obtains;
For what was done for them was done for me.

Air.

I.

Ye daughters of affluence open your stores,
'Tis the widow entreats; 'tis the orphan implores.
The husband, the father lies cold in the grave;
But your pity may comfort, your charity save.

II.

And when the storm rages, the piercing wind blows;
And when on your pillows you seek for repose;
The angel of mercy that reigns in your breast
With sweet recollection shall lull you to rest.

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rious musical compositions may be mentioned, *Ode on Washington*, *Glory of Columbia*, *Maid of the Mill*, *The Rose*, *Hunter of the Alps*, and *Child of Mortality*, to words by Mrs. Rowson, in 1821. On entering the hall of the Handel and Haydn Society (of which he was a member) just previous to his final departure for Europe, that body rose to receive him, and performed with great effect his *Child of Mortality* in testimony of its admiration of his genius. It was his requiem. Repairing to Leeds, his native place, for health, he died there on his birthday, June 19, 1822, and his fine musical library was accidentally destroyed. His death is noticed kindly in the *Christian Register* for August 9, 1822. The names of his children are: 1, John Francis; 2, Emma Sophia; 3, Frances Anne; 4, Henry; 5, Charles, m. Miss Eliza Davenport, and is a merchant, 145 Milk street, Boston; 6, Edgar; 7, Edwin.

Trio.

Hail! hail! sweet cherub Charity,
Thou first of virtues, hail!
For thou canst blend in misery's cup,
The balmy, cheering cordial, Hope,
When other comforts fail.

And thou, meek-eyed Humility
Instruct us all to own
Our noblest efforts weak must be,
And we're deficient when the best is done.

Full Chorus.

Great God of love and light and day
We humbly here our offering lay,
Before the footstool of thy throne.
All that we have, O Lord is thine,
And should we all to thee resign
We only render back thy own.
To soothe and mitigate distress
O make us ever free.
And may our hearts in holiness,
The glory give to thee.[1]

In the *New England Galaxy* for December 22, 1820, we are informed that "The following song by Mrs.

[1] For this fine poem and the celebration, see the *Centinel* of that day.

Rowson, set to music by Mr. John Bray, was sung at the Oratorio on Tuesday evening (Dec. 19), by Master Ayling, a lad of about twelve years of age."

I.

When the cloud has passed away
The sacred bow adorns the sky;
And rich on every flower and spray,
Hang sparkling gems of varied dye.

II.

Then gazing on the blue serene,
The soul elated soars above,
Beholds the Author in the scene,
Soothed into peace and holy love.

III.

Dying, fading in the west,
Lost is the sun's declining beam;
While from the east in splendor drest,
The moon pours radiance on the stream.

IV.

And gentle zephyrs, sportive, light,
Just sighing, whisp'ring, through the grove,
Put each unhallowed thought to flight,
And soothe to peace and holy love.

The most celebrated sacred lyrical composition of this lady, however, is her *Child of Mortality* written, also, for an anthem, by Mr. John Bray. It

were not easy to find, I think, in the whole range of devotional poetry, so many weighty thoughts compressed into a form so solid and compact, and at the same time clothed in language so vivacious and dramatic. The theme is one, the unity is perfect; — the origin of man, his mortal life, his resurrection, the way to heavenly rest, the pleasures that await him there and the ascription of the praise to God, are all logically welded together and cemented in the glowing imagination of the author, who thus in four brief stanzas presents, as it were, the very sum and substance of the glorious doctrines of Christianity. It is delightful to see this noble woman's muse, as the shadows of evening begin to fall, assuming a loftier flight and fondly anticipating the brightness of the celestial morning.

Child of Mortality.[1]

[By Susanna Rowson. Set to music by John Bray.]

I.

Child of mortality, whence dost thou come?
From the dark womb of earth
I first derived my birth,
And when the word goes forth,
That is my home.

[1] For the words and music, see the *Modern Harp*, by Edward L. White and John E. Gould, p. 303.

II.

Child of a transient day, there shalt thou rest?
No! when this dream is o'er,
Then the freed soul will soar
To where sorrow comes no more;
Realms of the blest.

III.

Heir of eternity, teach me the road.
Trust a Redeemer's love;
Faith by obedience prove;
And share in courts above
Christ's own abode.

IV.

There in etherial plains,
Join the angelic strains;
Jesus forever reigns;
Glory to God.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"She possessed an exact and accurate knowledge of the scriptures, and had committed to memory most of the striking passages in them."—HANNAH MORE, *Hints*, p. 18.

In the spring of 1822, Mrs. Rowson, finding herself in impaired health and the infirmities of age increasing, committed her beloved school into the hands of her adopted daughter, Miss Fanny M. Mills,[1] and her niece, Miss Susan R. Johnston, both of whom she had educated in her family; and devoted her remaining days and strength to the completion of her literary undertakings. Her last advertisement is characteristic, evincing alike her

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[1] She was the daughter of Mr. John Mills, of England, who was educated as a lawyer, but left his profession for the stage. He was a man of genius, a scholar and a poet, and obtained considerable reputation as an actor. His daughter was placed when about six years old, at Mrs. Rowson's academy, who, on the death of Mr. Mills, adopted her and educated her as her own daughter. Her generosity was well repaid in the rapid progress Miss Mills made in the useful and elegant branches of education, and in the affectionate regard she ever bore towards her benefactress. Miss Mills married for her first husband, Mr. George Lord, a merchant of Boston, by whom she had Georgiana, who married Mr. Hall of New York, and then Dr. Richard S. Spofford, of Newburyport, by whom she has Richard S., who married the talented Miss Harriet Prescott, and now resides in Newburyport. The fortunes of the Mills family are, to some extent, given in the novel entitled *Aunt Margaret's Secret.*

sense of declining years and a grateful appreciation of the patronage she had so long received. It appears in the *Centinel* for April 3d, 1822:

"Young Ladies' Academy, Hollis street. Mrs. Rowson, grateful for the patronage she has enjoyed from the inhabitants of the state of Massachusetts and particularly of Boston, and vicinity, during nearly twenty-five years, while she has been occupied in the instruction of female youth, begs leave thus publicly to make her heartfelt acknowledgments. Advanced into the vale of years and infirm in health, she must, however painful to her feelings, relinquish her duties in the school, and presumes to solicit that the same kindness and patronage may be extended to her adopted daughter, Miss Mills, and her niece, Miss Johnston, both having received their education in her family, the former for twelve years past, and the latter nearly three. Mrs. Rowson pledges herself that their qualifications, tempers and principles are such as she shall ever feel a pride in having formed, and such as she trusts will ever be honored with the perfect confidence of those parents who may entrust their children to their care. Miss Mills and Miss Johnston propose to commence the school on Monday, April 15th. Mrs. Rowson will always attend to the composition herself. She also begs leave to mention that she shall be happy to accommodate two or three young ladies with board at a very moderate rate; where they may, if the parents wish it, be attended with a music instructor. An excellent piano-forte is in the house, of which they can have the use for $2 per quarter. Every attention will be paid by Mrs. Rowson to the comfort, health and manners of the young ladies committed to her care."

It had been the invariable custom of this eminent teacher to make the Bible a text book in her school, and to explain with sedulous care its sacred pages to her pupils. She resolved, if possible, to lead them to appreciate its excellence and to impress its solemn sanctions on their ductile minds. To this end she not only read and interpreted the precious volume, but actually committed to writing for them, a continuous history of the most remarkable incidents and events therein related. This elaborate work which must have cost her years of study and research, she committed to the press in February, 1822. It is written in the form of a colloquy between Mr. and Mrs. Alworth and their children, and bears the following title :

Biblical Dialogues between a Father and his Family : Comprising Sacred History from the Creation to the Death of our Saviour Christ. The Lives of the Apostles and the Promulgation of the Gospel; with a Sketch of the History of the Church down to the Reformation. The whole carried on in conjunction with Profane History. In two volumes. By Susanna Rowson.[1]

[1] Boston : Richardson & Lord, 1822, pp. 416 and 395. This is the dedication : " To the Right Rev. Alexander V. Griswold, D.D., Bishop of the Eastern Diocese, whose learning, piety and Christian urbanity have rendered him universally beloved and respected, this work is inscribed with sentiments of the highest deference, veneration and esteem by the author.

SUSANNA ROWSON.

With admirable tact and skill, she brings by the aid of the writings of the learned Prideaux, Poole, Stackhouse, Schuckford and Calmet, the light of profane, to illumine the obscure passages of sacred history, and ably meets the cavils and objections of the infidel. Taking her listeners gently by the hand, she leads them pleasantly along through the labyrinths of biblical history; always telling the "good old story" gracefully, and sustaining her narrative by apt and appropriate references to geography and chronology. Her style is easy, flowing, natural; her language, elevated, as the subject justly claims. In her preface she gives this interesting account of her own personal experience in studying and teaching Holy Writ.

"To trace all moral and religious truth up to its divine source, it is necessary that children should be taught, not only to read, but to understand the Bible. To teach them to read it was an easy task; but to make them understand it, associate ideas, to connect the events related, the persons mentioned, the places where those events happened and where those persons lived with the same events, persons and places mentioned in profane history, was an herculean labor. I perfectly remembered the time when to my own uninformed mind the world of the Bible and the world of which I felt myself an in-

habitant were two distinct worlds. As I advanced in life, a naturally inquiring disposition, assisted by some learned and judicious friends and an insatiable love of reading, began to open my understanding; and though I could not comprehend the highly figurative language of the prophets, or more sublime parts of the inspired writings, yet I began to perceive the connection between the Old and New Testaments, and in a slight degree between sacred and profane history, and as I happily had a step-mother (a New England lady) who whenever I did wrong made me judge of the rectitude of the action by referring me to the commandments delivered from Sinai, or our Lord's sermon on the mount, I was early accustomed to make the Bible my study and guide. When I became engaged in the momentous business of instructing females of the rising generation, whose future conduct as wives and mothers was to stamp the moral and religious character and ensure in a great measure the virtue and consequent happiness of another age, I could not but feel the great responsibility of the undertaking. My whole soul was engaged in my duties; my pupils became to me as my children, and few things were of consequence to me that did not contribute to their improvement, their present and eternal happiness. The Bible was read in classes, always

once, and sometimes twice a week; but some read with perfect indifference, some, though they appeared to wish to understand, were confused and bewildered in their ideas, and if any time I wished to render it plain to their unsophisticated minds, I felt my own inefficiency so powerfully that I had almost despaired of success, when chance threw in my way *Camp's Dialogues on the Faculties of the Soul*, and the *History of Cortez and Pizarro*, by the same author, in conversations between a father and his children. I introduced these books into my school, and found that the children became interested in the recitals and read them with avidity. The thought then struck me that if something of the same kind could be produced from the history of the Bible it might be of infinite benefit to the young, the ignorant or weak minded, who having neither time nor perseverance to investigate, nor judgment to discriminate, were easily led astray by the cavils of affected philosophy, or the jeering taunts of ridicule."

A single extract from the body of the work will serve as a specimen of the felicitous manner in which the whole is executed.

The Extent of the Deluge. The World not Formed by Chance.

James. Do you think, sir, the effects of this deluge were felt equally in every part of the globe; that the whole earth was inundated?

Father. There is no doubt of it: inquire of the inhabitants of every climate; we shall find that the fame of the deluge has gone through the whole earth. Every nation has some record or tradition of it. The Indians in America acknowledge and speak of it in various parts of the continent. The Chinese, who are the most distant people in Asia, have a tradition concerning it. The natives of Africa tell various stories of its effects; and in the European parts there is a tradition of a flood which agrees with the account of the flood given by Moses; only a little disguised by fable; which in a greater or less degree pervades all the early histories of the heathen or pagan writers. Moses assures us that the waters prevailed fifteen cubits above the tops of the highest mountains; and the mountains existing at this day in every quarter of the globe, are a sufficient testimony to the truth of the assertion. The Alps, the Apennines, the Pyrenees, the Andes, Atlas and Ararat, every mountain in every region from Japan to Mexico, contains in its bowels the spoils of the ocean; beds of shells, petrified bones, teeth of fish and sea monsters of every kind. The whole universe affords incontestible evidence of the fact. Skeletons of animals are found in countries where that kind of animal has never been known to exist; crocodiles in the heart of Germany, and what is more, trees and plants of various kinds have been thus preserved in the centre of the earth, which are not now known to grow in any region under heaven.

Charles. What folly then it is for people to say that the world was made by chance. Could chance do this?

Father. Folly indeed; its folly can only be exceeded by its wickedness. When you behold the course of a ship upon the water, do you not conclude that it is directed by art? Were the noblest ship launched upon the ocean and left to chance, would it not become the sport of the waves and wind; and having been tossed about in every contrary direction be at length dashed upon the rocks, or engulfed in the unfathomable abyss of the waters? Can you contemplate a clock or watch and not acknowledge that it is the work of a skillful artist? It points the hour, it strikes the number upon the bell and performs many other extraordinary things; but omit to wind it up at the appointed time; it is still, it is silent, it is useless. Would you not pronounce that man stupid and devoid of reason who should assert that this wonderful little machine was formed by chance, went by chance, that it stopped by chance, and by chance may go again?

Horatio. Sir, no one but a perfect idiot could make such an assertion.

Father. How much more stupid is it then for any one to assert and endeavor to persuade others that this most beautiful world, those glorious planets which roll above us, and which for nearly six thousand years have performed their allotted course uniformly in the appointed period, could have been formed by chance? He might as well assert that if innumerable figures of the four and twenty letters which form the alphabet were casually thrown from some high place upon the ground, they would fall so disposed and arranged as to form a complete dictionary, encyclopedia, or any other book; whereas it would be a very great wonder if even one small connected sentence could be found in the whole confused mass. If chance formed

the world, why has it not somewhere or other formed upon the earth a temple, a house, or a city? Yet this is so far from ever having been the case, that should a man be cast upon a desolate island, and find there a building of any kind, however rude, it would never enter his head that it came there by chance; that it was produced by an earthquake or had stood there from the first construction of the world. No; he would conclude that some intelligent being had been there and that the building was the effect of his labor and skill. Or should he find there but one sheet of paper with writing on it containing sense and elegance of diction; do you suppose he would think it had been produced by the dashes of an unguided pen, or the rude scattering of ink upon the paper? No, my children, you are convinced that no man in his senses could be so absurd. He would not only conclude that some man, but that a man who had received the benefits of education had been there. Look, then, around you, my beloved children, observe with an understanding mind, the beauty, order, and if I may be allowed the expression, the regular variety of animate and inanimate nature, then lift up your hearts in devout adoration to the Great First Cause; that Supreme Intelligence that formed, supports and governs all, and say: Father we are thy children; we are weak and blind and helpless; assist us with thy power; teach us by thy wisdom; guard us with thy mercy. Teach us, O Father, to know, to love and serve thee in an acceptable manner; give us that wisdom which leadeth to salvation."

Mr. Alworth then arose and offered a devout prayer to the God of all for the safety and eternal welfare of his family; and having recapitulated to his family the many reasons for their faith in the Holy Scriptures and concluding with "Lord help us to understand and believe aright," he retired to his chamber.— *Biblical Dialogues*, vol. 1, p. 59.

In the autumn of the same year this gifted and industrious lady published a volume of historical exercises for the purpose, as she avers, "of awakening a laudable curiosity for the reading of history." The title of the work is *Exercises in History, Chronology and Biography in question and answer for the use of schools, comprising Ancient History, Greece, Rome, etc. Modern History, England, France, Spain, Portugal, etc.; the discovery of America, Rise, Progress and final Independence of the United States. By Susanna Rowson, author of Biblical Dialogues, etc., etc.*

It is in the form of question and answer as taught in her academy, and I know not where so much of what is really valuable in history can be found recorded in so small a compass as in the one hundred and seventy pages of this little compend. In her preface the author very touchingly refers to her long career as a teacher, her love of America and the proximity of the closing hour of life:

"Out of sixty years which I have been permitted to exist in this transitory world, twenty-five have been devoted to the cultivation of the minds of the youth of my dear adopted country, America; in particular, the young ladies of Boston and its vicinity. Many leisure hours in early life were devoted to their amusement, and I trust I can say that among the productions of my pen I have never

promulgated a sentence that could militate against the best interests of religion, virtue and morality. The morning of life has declined; the sun has passed the meridian and the shadows of evening are quickly advancing; soon will the gloom of night enshroud me, but to my latest hour I shall devote my leisure to the improvement or innocent amusement of youth.

Boston, Oct. 12, 1822."

CHAPTER XIX.

While through this changing world we roam
From infancy to age;
Heaven is the Christian pilgrim's home,
His rest at every stage.—*James Montgomery.*

Under the pressure of many literary and benevolent labors, cares and anxieties for the welfare of others, Mrs. Rowson's health now began seriously to decline; and, though in her descent towards the "dark valley" her heart was upheld by an unfaltering trust in God, she still experienced moments of sadness and sorrow at the thought of her approaching dissolution. The fear that she might be left to die unheeded and alone, would sometimes cast its darkling shadow over her confiding soul. Her kindred had fallen one after another by land or sea; her father died in 1805; her last remaining brother,[1]

[1] ROBERT HASWELL, her oldest brother, named from his uncle, Robert Haswell of the British navy, who died November 10, 1800, sailed around the world in the ship Columbia Rediviva and kept a journal of the voyage from 1787 to 1789. He also kept the log book of the same vessel in another voyage under Capt. Gray, extending from August 14, 1791, to May, 1793. It was during this voyage that Capt. Gray discovered Columbia river, cast anchor in its spacious bay, and bestowed on it the name of his vessel. In his *Astoria*, p. 38, Irving says: "The Columbia is believed to be the first ship that made a regular discovery and anchored within its waters, and it has since borne the name of that vessel." These books are beautifully written, and are still in the possession of

John Montresor Haswell, died in 1810; William Rowson, a natural son of her husband, whom this noble lady loved and cherished as her own, had been lost in Boston harbor on his return from a long voyage at sea; her school had been relinquished;

John J. Clarke, Esq., of Boston. Robert Haswell and his brother John Montresor Haswell, were officers and greatly distinguished themselves on board the Boston, in the sharp engagement with the French corvette, Le Berceau, in the month of November, 1800. Lieutenant Robert Haswell left the naval service at the peace establishment, 1801, and sailed in August in the same year, in the Louisa, fitted out by Capt. John Gray, for the north-west coast, and was lost on his return home. He married Mary, daughter of Joseph Cordis, merchant of Charlestown, Oct. 17, 1797, by whom he had 1, Mary, m. George Murdock of Boston, May 19, 1819, and had Ellen Haswell, m. the Rev. Samuel Osgood; and Eliza A. S. m. C. E. Soale, Esq. 2, Rebecca Cordis, m. John J. Clarke, Esq., son of the Rev. Pitt Clarke, of Boston, May 25, 1830, and has Mary Lemist Clarke, m. John A. Hanson, and Haswell Cordis Clarke. The widow of Lieut. Robert Haswell, m. John Lemist, who was lost in the ill fated Lexington, in 1840. She died in Boston, November 23, 1868, aged eighty-seven years. William Haswell, the second brother of Mrs. Rowson, was master of a vessel sailing out of Boston. He m. Miss Nancy Bull, and died sine prole.

John Montresor, her youngest brother, named from Col. John Montresor of the British army, became a midshipman in our navy, 1800, and received the thanks of congress for his signal valor in the war with Tripoli. He was promoted to a lieutenancy, February 26, 1807. He died of yellow fever, in Charleston, S. C., 1810, leaving no issue. The Haswell famify is of Scottish origin and espoused the cause of Charles Edward Stuart. Robert, the grandfather of Mrs. Rowson, died 1766, aged seventy-five years. Her own father, William, was commissioned as lieutenant, 1756. A relative, Anthony Haswell, came from Portsmouth, Eng., to this country prior to the revolution, settled in Bennington, Vt., where he established the *Gazette*, which he conducted with ability till his death, May 27, 1816. He was an estimable man, and left many descendants.

and though she had herself educated, soothed and blessed so many of her sex, the sad feeling still came over her, that she must pass away with none to bend above her pillow and to close her dying eye. In such an hour of sadness and depression a little prior to her decease, she penned the following pathetic lines:

To Miss Rebecca Cordis Haswell.

I.

Rebecca, my loved one, the last of thy race,
Thy father still lives in his sister's fond heart;
Though long past the time, yet can memory trace
The hour when necessity urged us to part.

II.

He sobbed as he rested his head on my shoulder,
And said: "To thy heart be my infant babes dear;
And my wife, if I never again should behold her,
Transfer thy affection, dear Susan, to her."

III.

I ne'er have forgotten the vow I then gave thee,
My first, dearest brother, protector and friend;
And though 'twas thy fate that no power could save thee;
My love for thy orphans can ne'er know an end.

IV.

Though my life's feeble taper, its last flicker throwing,
On thy offspring, just rising, gleams fitfully round,
My heart's latest beat its kind wishes bestowing,
On them and on theirs, shall expend its last bound.

v.

My dear loved Rebecca, when looking around me,
I see desolation extending its wing;
Nor father, nor mother, nor brothers surround me,
Time seems to have taken from death its last sting.

VI.

For even the son I adopted and cherished,
Whose grateful affection was balm to my breast,
In the bloom and the beauty of manhood has perished,
And lies on the margin of waters at rest.

VII.

But thou art still spared; my dear Mary remains;
And a long valued friend to my heart is restored,
And Hope's buoyant pinion its vigor retains;
Whilst I look on my treasure; exult in the hoard.

VIII.

O grant, gracious Heaven, I may not be left
Forsaken and lonely and useless to lie;
Of friend and connections and daughters bereft;
Unpitied to suffer, unheeded to die.

IX.

May one gentle bosom support me when dying,
May one gentle eye shed a tear on my shrine;
Rebecca, I feel when my soul shall be flying,
Perhaps the kind tear; the last care may be thine."

S. R.

The author's wish was gratified. The sufferings of her closing hours were soothed by the assiduous

and kind attentions of Miss Fanny M. Mills, Miss Rebecca C. Haswell and Miss Susan Johnston, whom she always called her children, and whose devotion she most gratefully appreciated and acknowledged to the last. In the arms of these affectionate and loving pupils, and in the hope of a blessed immortality, Mrs. Rowson expired on the second day of March, 1824, at the age of sixty-three years, and was entombed on Thursday following in the family vault No. 14, of her friend, Mr. Gotlieb Graupner, beneath St. Matthew's church,[1] South Boston.

In recording her death, the newspapers speak of her as "distinguished for her talents, virtues and intelligence;" as an "eminent preceptress;" as a "model of industry;" a "great economist;" of "remarkable conversational powers," and "to her charities," says a writer in the *Boston Gazette*, "there was no end." A few days subsequent to her decease, a fine poem over the signature of J. E., descriptive of her character and virtues, appeared in the *Columbian Centinel*, from which I make this extract:

---

[1] This church was demolished in 1866, and the remains of bodies not claimed by relatives were transferred to Mount Hope Cemetery, where all that was mortal of this excellent woman now reposes. It is hoped that some suitable monument will be erected to her memory.

" * * * I knew
Some twenty years ago this lady's worth
As an instructress, when around her sat
Thirty fair misses ready at her beck
To draw the needle with the silken thread
Through the framed specimen of female art;
To trace the forms of nature with their tints
And various shades with pliant pencil dipped
In their appropriate colors; or to say what kings
And people and what warriors too
That fight their battles; what the world was once,
And what it still remained, they learned. Then, too,
All that the female mind required to form
A bulwark 'gainst the assaults of human art
Or intellectual weakness, or raise
The aspiring genius to celestial themes. * * *
But who can measure all her worth, or find
A rival to her industry, or tell
What deeds her needle, pencil, or her pen
In leisure hour performed?"

The most elaborate notice of her life and character, however, was written by Samuel L. Knapp, Esq., and appeared in the *Boston Gazette*, soon after her death.

CHAPTER XX.

Their works do follow them.—*St. John.*

In her religious views, Mrs. Rowson was, as I have said, an Episcopalian, and in her later years a regular attendant on the preaching of the Rev. Dr. John Sylvester Gardiner, at Trinity church. Her piety was intelligent, ardent, active and sincere. She believed that religion consisted mainly in diffusing the sunshine of love through a genial temper of mind, through pleasant words and deeds of beneficence. Her heart was a temple filled with the music of grateful emotion, which was ever rolling forth in golden strains of charity. She was a rigid economist, in order that she might be a liberal almoner of the bounties of her Master. She received into her family and educated several young ladies gratuitously, and led them into the way of obtaining for themselves an honorable support. She delighted especially in making young people happy, and her pleasant "God bless you, my darling," was indeed a precious benediction.

She was awakened on one bitter cold winter night by one of the family who came to tell her

that somebody was at her wood pile stealing wood. "God help the poor creatures," she in pity replied, "if they need it enough to come for it on such a night as this, let them have it and welcome."

She took a profound interest in the Fatherless and Widow's Society, and her scholars even could tell by the vivacity of her spirits when any new object of charity had been assisted, or when a meeting of that excellent society was at hand. The misfortune of persons and families connected with the stage ever awakened in her heart the liveliest sympathy, and many a poor actress has had occasion to remember her refreshing words of counsel and her charities with equal delicacy and heartiness bestowed.

If her matrimonial life was not happy, no one discovered it by any want of kindness or attention on her part. She was, as every one who knew her testifies, a most devoted wife. Her story of *Sarah* is her own. Whatever she deemed her duty, that she made her pleasure. Though worn with illness and fatigue, she was always up at night with a bright fire and some little delicacy on her table to give her husband cheerful welcome home. But during these long vigils she was never idle. With a circle of young ladies seated around her and conversing or reading by turns some interesting book, she threw

off an amount of needle work for the household, or for the poor, almost incredible.

In regard to industry, she has never been excelled. She suffered not a moment to be lost. Rising early, ordering all things systematically, working steadily, cheerfully and rapidly, she astonished every one by the advancement she made in learning, and by the ease and celerity with which she executed what to other minds appeared herculean labors. By her own untiring efforts she acquired the treasures both of ancient and modern history; she learned the French and Latin languages; she obtained a good knowledge of music and could play quite skillfully on the piano and guitar; she was an elegant dancer; she became a proficient in painting, drawing, and embroidery; she learned to navigate a ship during a voyage across the ocean; she managed the concerns of her household with great wisdom, neatness, and economy; she governed and taught with consummate ability a large boarding and day school; she wrote many articles expressly for that school; she entertained a great deal of fashionable company; she took an active part in society, in literature, politics and religion; she visited the poor and needy; she corresponded largely with her friends in Europe and America; she wrote for the periodi-

cal press continually, and while in the midst of these varied employments, sometimes gave the public a volume or two a year as an extra presentation. She was a living woman. *Son âme*, as Madam De Stael has said, *se mèle à tout.* And yet the dignity of her demeanor as a lady was never compromised; for every thing she touched was brightened by her genius; and her delicate sense of propriety inscribed the circle carefully wherein true womanhood may develop its full power and most imperially confer its benediction on the world.

Our literary ladies but too often make a sacrifice of the domestic graces to the pen; but she considered writing the improvement of a leisure moment merely, and had so fine a sense of what belonged to a woman's sphere in the direction of her family, such an innate love of order and such executive power withal, that the arrangements of her household were as perfect, the spreading of her table as exquisitely neat, as if her whole attention had been confined to them alone.

The versatility of this gifted lady's talent is most remarkable. Madame De Genlis once observed that she had so mastered twenty arts that by any one of them she could obtain a livelihood. This might be truly said of Mrs. Rowson; but her favorite employment was to teach. In this delightful vo-

cation, she had few, if any, equals in her day. She possessed preeminently the very first element of successful teaching; a large, warm, loving heart. At the same time she was dignified and commanding in look and gesture. While she gained her pupil's love, she secured, also, her reverence and respect. There was that in her large, dark, piercing eye, which seemed to detect a falsehood instantly. But though severe in probing insincerity to the very quick, she held the balm of gentleness in willing hand to heal the wound. *Instruire, c'est inspirer*, most truly says the accomplished author of *L'Éducation des Mères*, and this rare faculty Mrs. Rowson had. Original, fertile in expedient, sprightly, eloquent, to be sure she was; but above all this, she had the liveliest poetic sympathy, she had a shining mark in view, and in aspiring to attain it, she inflamed the hearts of her dear pupils with her own emotions and bound them to her and to learning as by fascination thrugh the potent witchery of her own strong and unselfish Christian love.

So deeply did she, through the might of her gentleness, impress the lineaments of her own character upon her pupils that the few of those thousands whom she educated still remaining, do after the lapse of more than half a century, cherish her memory as tenderly as a mother's; and still repeat

her words of wisdom as reverently and recount her virtues as lovingly as those of the sainted one from whom they drew their being.

Through the young ladies then of the past generation, Mrs. Rowson exercised a most benign and blessed influence upon the morals and the manners of New England. While the votary of fashion was wasting time and talents in the gay round of frivolous amusement, she was imprinting the indellible marks of her genius upon the polished pillars of the temple of our greatness; while the brawling politician was wasting breath in vain complaints against the discords in the music of the church and state, her cunning fingers were busily employed in tuning the unseen strings into the perfect harmony. The power behind the throne in this birthland of freedom is the mother. The artistic hand of Mrs. Rowson made good mothers. One of them writes to me: "Six ladies who were at her school with me, I am still acquainted with. They have all made good wives and mothers; have reared large families; some of their sons have become distinguished men, and thus these ladies have fulfilled the destiny which Napoleon considered woman's highest glory;" and whenever I have had the pleasure of meeting a pupil of this celebrated teacher, I have invariably

found her to be a woman of intelligence, refinement and exalted virtue.

In such mothers, in such children, in such influences, diffused and gentle as the aroma of the flowers borne by the winds across the desert, Mrs. Rowson lives amongst us still. The echoes of her gentle voice are murmuring sweetly still. The gems she touched with beauty sparkle still. The spirit she evoked is breathing and the strings she struck are quivering still; the life she lived is eloquently speaking still, and as the tide of our national glory rolls along, will be most eloquently discoursing still; and may we not believe that when the Master shall make up his jewels at the final audit, this accomplished writer, this faithful wife, this loving teacher, this blessed almoner of God's sweet mercies to the poor, this humble, earnest and adoring Christian, will, surrounded by the radiant gems of her own polishing, and beaming in etherial light, live still!

FINIS.

MRS. ROWSON'S PUPILS.

It would be impossible to give the names of all the ladies who had the benefit of her immediate instruction; but from the papers now before me I am enabled to make the following record:

Amory, the Misses, daughters of R. Greene Amory, Esq., of Roxbury.
Ayer, H., Manchester, N. H.
Bartlett, Julia, daughter of Dr John Bartlett, Roxbury. She was an excellent reader. She m. Mr. Hill.
Bartlett, Hannah, m. John Porter, Newburyport.
Bartlett, Laura, Haverhill, N. H.
Bishop, Miss, Medford, m. N. Parsons.
Bishop, Rebecca.
Bliss, Louisa, Haverhill, N. H.
Boyd, Miss, Portland.
Bradlee, Susan. Mrs. R. wrote lines on her death.
Brooks, Lucy, daughter of Gov. John Brooks, and b. June 16, 1775; m. Rev. O'Kill Stuart.
Burgess, Sarah.
Burroughs, Eliza.
Burton, A. M. She delivered the introductory address at the exhibition, Oct. 27, 1803.
Casey, Miss.
Child, Isabella.
Christie, Nancy.
Claiborne, Emily.
Coverly, Sarah G., m. E. G. Ware. She attended Mrs. R.'s school in Federal St., Boston, and rode in the carriage with her when she removed to Medford.
Dane, Miss, Gloucester.
Dexter, " "
Dewolf, Misses, Bristol, R. I.

Dow, Mary, Haverhill, N. H.
Downs, Clarissa, Boston.
Downs, Harriet.
Drake, Maria P., Northwood, N. H., sister of S. G. Drake, Esq., the distinguished antiquary.
Duncan, Nancy, Concord, N. H.
Eaton, Miss.
English, Mary, Brighton.
Farmer, Ann Maria, niece of Mrs. Baring, of Newport, R. I.
Field, Sophia.
Fiske, Mehetable, Natick, m. Rufus Fiske.
Fougue, Henrietta Maria, Newburyport.
French, Caroline.
French, Catharine.
Gay, Caroline, m. Caleb Eddy, Boston.
Giles, Narcissa, Newburyport.
Gray, Lucia, m. Samuel Swett. She was daughter of Wm. Gray, of Medford.
Graupner, Catharine C., Boston, m. George Cushing.
Graupner, Olivia H., Boston.
Greene, Mary Ann, m. Judge Hubbard, Boston.
Greene, Charlotte, m. Wm. Butters, Pittsfield, N. H.
Hale, Mary Ann, m. Dr. Nathanael Lowe, Dover, N. H.
Hale, Martha.
Halliburton, Miss, Portsmouth, N. H.
Hammond, Julia, Brookline.
Hamlin, Miss.
Harris, Miss.
Haswell, Mary.
Haswell, Rebecca Cordis, m. J. J. Clarke, Esq.
Hill, Lucy, m. Oliver Everett.
Holbrook, Eliza Edwards, Wrentham.
Holbrook, Mary, m. Silas Holbrook, Wrentham.
Hull, Julia, daughter of Gen. Wm. Hull.
Hull, Caroline, " "
Hull, Rebecca, " "
Hutchins, Caroline, m. Mr. Thatcher.
Huntington, Miss, Norwich, Conn., m. the Rev. Dr. Hooker.
Ingraham, Misses.
Jackson, P. W. She gave the closing address at the exhibition, October 27, 1803.
Johnson, Frances, Hillsborough, N. H.
Johnston, Susan, niece of Mrs. Rowson.

Jones, Misses, four daughters of Alexander Jones, Providence, R. I.
Knapp, Caroline, m. Dr. Hayward.
Knox, Juliana. Mrs. Rowson wrote some lines on her decease addressed to her mother. See ante p. 148.
Lambert, Misses. Ladies remarkable for personal beauty.
Lane, Mary, Ten Hills Farm, Medford.
Lanman, Miss, Norwich, Conn.
Leach, Miss, Boston.
Mann, Mary Ann, Wrentham.
M'Clure, Ruth.
Mansfield, Misses, two, Gloucester.
Means, Mary Ann, Amherst, N. H., died Sept. 12, 1812.
Means, Jane, " " Nov. 2, 1805.
Mellen, Miss, m. Prof. Levi Frisbee.
Mellen, Miss, Cambridge, sister of the preceding.
Mills, Frances M. Mrs. R. adopted her as her daughter about 1810
Montgomery, Ann.
Montgomery, Mary K., daughter of Gen. John Montgomery of Haverhill, N. H., m. Samuel Batchelder, Esq., Cambridge, d. 1859.
Montgomery, Myra.
Montgomery, Nancy.
Morton, Miss Mary, Freetown, sister of Governor Marcus Morton.
Norton, Jerusha, m. Josiah J. Fiske, Wrentham.
Noyes, Mary, Newburyport.
Neil, Miss.
Page, Lydia, Charlestown.
Parsons, Eliza, daughter of Chief Justice Parsons.
Parsons, Lydia.
Porter, Caroline, a fine scholar.
Powell, Isabella, Boston.
Pratt, Susan.
Price, Susan, Jamaica, W. Indies.
Price, Frances.
Proctor, Elizabeth.
Ripley, Miss.
Robbins, Martha, Lexington, Mass.
Rose, Anne, from London, Eng., m. Joseph Swan. She opened a day school for girls in Medford in 1811, and died in 1859.

Rowson, Charlotte, m. William P. Johnston of Philadelphia, and died July, 1855.
Russell, Eliza, Boston.
Sheafe, Mary Huske, m. Edward Cutts, lawyer, Portsmouth, N. H., d. 1868.
Swan, Hannah, Medford.
Swan, Peggy, Medford. An assistant in Mrs R.'s school.
Thomson, Catharine, Medford.
Trask, Misses, three, Gloucester.
Tufts, Peggy.
Wait, Sarah, Medford, m. S. Symmes and then J. Howe.
Wait, Harriet.
Waldron, Miss, Portsmouth, N. H.
Warner, Mary.
Waterhouse, Maria Towle.
West, Eliza, Salem, Mass.
Whittemore, Eliza, Cambridge.
Whittemore, Hannah Maria.
Whittemore, Sarah Anne.
Williams, Mary. Afterwards a successful teacher in Roxbury.

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